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THE

MATE of the "EASTER BELL"

THE

MATE of the "EASTER BELL"

AND OTHER STORIES.

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AMELIA E. BARR,

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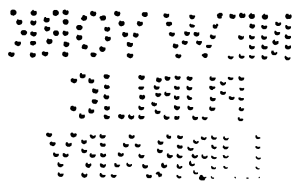

THE MATE OF THE "EASTER BELL."

CHAPTER I.

"We sons of Norsemen, we should love the sea,
The fresh winds, coiled nets, ballast heap,
The full brown sails."

* * * * * * *

"And the singing of the sailors,
And the answer from the shore."

FIND my stories in the world. I only write them down. And whoever lived in Fairport in the days when I was young must have known Tom Breton, the mate of the *Easter Bell.* For all communities have their favorites, and Tom was the pride of the bright Cumberland haven; so that when the *Easter Bell* came into harbor, the skippers and sailor-folk told each other: "Tom Breton is home again!" And then many a pretty woman walked down to the North Wall to

breathe the fresh salt air and to look at the handsome sailor lad.

Tom, at the wheel of the *Easter Bell*, came into port one year on the Saturday between Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

"And it isn't likely Bell's ship would get in any other time," said the lighthouse-keeper. "There be Christmas ships, and Easter ships, and some that wait for the Michaelmas-tide; but, as every one knows, the *Easter Bell* gets home at Easter-time, and when she doesn't, I'll know she's dead and buried, and poor Tom Breton with her."

He, too, thought mainly of Tom, and as he did so he turned his face to the ship. She had almost a human look. It was easy to believe that a spirit dwelt within her restless ribs of oak—*the spirit* of the ship that moaned and groaned when tempests tossed her to and fro; that piped and whistled among the sails when winds were fair and waters smooth, and that in many ways had power to influence her fate. These old Northern sailors believed in such *possession*. Certain men were counted lucky builders. The laying of the keel, the launching and christening of the ship were matters to which they attributed an importance only their long and strange experiences justified.

The *Easter Bell*, however, had only lucky precedents. She was built for Christopher Bell, the rich sail-maker and ship chandler. She was called after his only child, and this child having been born on Easter morning, was named for the gladdest day in all the year. Easter Bell had christened the ship

on Easter day, and the ship carried at her prow the image of the maid whose name she bore. On Easter Monday the ship went first to sea, and on the next Easter Monday she came sailing into Fairport harbor again with the results of a year's fortunate trading. Ever since then some power that men call "accident" had brought her home at Easter-time, so that it seemed a part of the festival to see Tom Breton standing by the wheel of the *Easter Bell* while she came in with all her canvas spread, courtesying to the roll of the waves and the chanty-songs of the sailors; for it is only on steamships sailors are silent. Under the blowing canvas their song is as natural as the fife and drum under the flying colors of a marching regiment.

Many a hearty "Hello, Tom!" many a waving kerchief and smiling face met the young mate as he came into harbor, humoring the ship as he knew how to, when she was scampering before a whole-sail breeze outside.

"Bless me! how deep in the water she is, and hardly a list to the wind; but Tom Breton is at the wheel, mind ye!" said one old man.

"And the women watching Tom, and him never letting on to see them. Ah, the young rascal!" added another.

That was true enough also, but Tom did not see the woman his heart and eyes were aching to see. Pretty Easter Bell was not on the pier, and before he could speak to the captain, Chris Bell was with him, and they went off together, with the ship's papers in the owner's pocket.

"And it will be black night that drives Bowes on board again. He'll be too well off at 'The Sailor's Rest' to hurry himself," mused Tom; "but to-morrow is Sunday, and I know where to find my beauty every blessed hour of the day."

When the skipper returned, he threw his head back in a beckoning way as he passed Tom, and Tom followed him into the cabin.

"My lad," he said, in a doleful voice, "there's something uppish about Chris Bell; and the girl was sitting like a born lady with a land-shark dressed in scarlet."

"A soldier, Bowes! Never! It isn't natural."

"It is true, Tom—a padded ramrod, dressed in scarlet. I rolled passed him as if he had been a painted buoy—'Danger' he means, Tom, and a warning off a reef, my lad."

"And Chris Bell uppish! That goes into my ears but not into my heart, Bowes."

"Well, he was rather high, you know—talked of this Captain Peel very proud-like—it made me sea-sick; it did that."

"Did you see Easter?"

"To be sure. She was dilly-dallying with a bit of sewing, and the soldier holding her bobbin of thread, with his arms on his knees, and his head bent nearer than need be. Look now, Tom, let the little girl Easter go."

"Not I! For a soldier! Fash on such nonsense! Easter Bell is mine. I won her with heart-love, and she won me. The man is not born—soldier or sailor—that shall part us. You may look, Bowes, but I

mean every word, just as if I was having my last dying say. And I cannot think Bell is changed. It is not easy to make a man sixty years old over again."

"I don't say, Tom, that I can read men, as I can read the water. I was not made for trading-folk and narrow doorways. Nature told me to live with sailors on the open deck and the wide sea. Maybe, then, I am not right; and maybe, then, I am right. To-morrow see for yourself, Tom. Take all day to-morrow, and tell Easter your love, to the keel of your heart."

The next morning Tom awoke in the Easter sunshine. Is there any sunshine like it? It dimpled the bay, and lay in bands of light across the town, and touched the church spires with a heavenly glory. The bells were ringing; the ship rocked gently on the incoming tide; she was spotlessly clean; she had almost a motherly look. In his little cabin, Tom dressed with that delight in the act which makes it a success. From the braided cap on his brown curls to the bows on his low-cut shoes, his suit was finely picturesque; it had the colors and the freedom of the ocean. And he was so handsome, so tall, and gay; so much of a man. Power as well as beauty was in his face and form; the sense of freedom; the clear look of an honest, purposeful life; the gentleness of a kindly heart; youth that had lost none of its illusions; hope undimmed; the light of love touching his humanity with glory, as the Easter sunshine touched the earth; these were the things that made men and

women look at the young sailor with a ready smile, and a spontaneous blessing.

The bells were ringing for church when they went on shore, and the streets were full of Easter worshipers. Generally, they wore their new Easter garments; and all carried in their hands their prayers-books and their Easter flowers. An air of holy festival was in the atmosphere—the very feeling of "heaven upon earth." Tom wondered why every one did not joyfully tell his neighbor: "*Christ has risen!*" For he suddenly remembered a bleak little icy town on the black Baltic, where he had been on one Easter Sabbath, and seen the wretched peasants forget their cares and sadness for one day in saying continually: "*Christ is risen!*" Why did not these dwellers in peace and plenty stop each other in the sunshine and repeat the same joyful message?

He wondered vaguely about it, till he reached the old parish church. Many people were laying flowers on the graves around it. He bared his head, and entered the holy place, and the organ was filling all its spaces with triumphant melody, and the holy feast was spread in snowy beauty upon the altar, and the dark oak pews were white with the sweet, fresh flowers of spring. "*Christ is risen, and is become the first-fruits of them that sleep!*" How the glorious affirmation thrilled Tom's heart! Such solemn gladness! If he did think of his love through that Easter service, he thought of her as purely as praying children think of the angels in heaven.

When the congregation rose, he went and stood in the inner porch of the church. Easter and her father must pass him, and he would not believe that there could be any change in them. Yet he trembled at heart as he had never done when the big seas, with the roar of a thousand guns, were going over the deck of his ship. In a few moments Easter came slowly forward, her gown of violet color and her straw bonnet trimmed with violets and white silk giving her the similitude of spring. Her father was on her right hand and Captain Peel on her left. Chris Bell saw Tom first, and he gave him that kind of a nod which is kindly but not encouraging. Peel stared haughtily at the sailor in their way, but Tom stood with his cap in his hand and his soul in his eyes, looking at Easter. It took her but a moment to resolve. She smiled at him, she put her hand into his hand, and then they went down the broad, sunny flags together. Chris Bell and Captain Peel followed them. Nor was it possible to say anything, or make any effort which would alter this position. So many people had to speak to Tom ; to ask after his ship, and the voyage, and the Easter luck he had brought with him.

And when they reached Bell's house, the old man could not avoid asking Tom to eat his dinner with him. It had been the usual way for so many years and the handsome mate had a charm for men, as well as for women. Chris fell under it. He told himself that one day could make but little difference, and that he would speak plainly enough to Tom at an early date. But he did not find it as easy to do

as he imagined it would be. He disliked to annoy his daughter, and he liked Tom well enough to dislike being rude to him.

Yet Peel had claims upon his favor of a much more tangible kind. He belonged to a family who were the owners of a steam-boat line, and who had otherwise a large interest in the shipping affairs of the town. In their business the Peels had greatly favored Bell's sails and ship-stores, and between the two houses much money had passed. As Peel's shipping interests had grown, Bell's stock had increased; and of all the men in Fairport, Bell desired most of all to conciliate "Peel & Sons." The elder man had expressed pleasure in his son's admiration for Miss Bell; for, as a great deal of Bell's money had come through Peel, it seemed to the captain's father rather a good thing for his youngest son to win it back, not only with interest, but with the hand of a beautiful young maiden.

Chris had the same desire. Such a marriage would lift his daughter into a higher social circle. The Peels were rich; they lived in good style, and entertained in a solidly magnificent manner. The head of the house had been twice mayor of the town. In every respect the marriage appeared to be desirable to both families. And the wooing had hitherto proceeded with apparent success. Perhaps the captain was not very eager, but he admired Easter, and he knew that his visits to her pleased his father. Easter also had received them with evident satisfaction, but it was born of vanity more than of love. There was a kind of distinction in

Captain Peel's attentions, and Easter thought it was no wrong in a girl to be proud of "a lover of high degree."

The return of Tom Breton altered the aspect of the little drama. During that moment in the church porch, *the question and answer* of Easter's heart had been made. As Tom stood there, and her eyes caught the light in his eyes, she felt all heaven and earth to be in that one flash of love. The captain became in a moment as if he had never been, and all sweet desires and hopes walked at her side in the shape of the handsome sailor.

It was not a pleasant Sunday to Chris. He foresaw, indeed, that it was the beginning of trouble. Tom had at once taken a position not compatible with the captain's claims, and as Easter had shown an evident predilection in Tom's favor, Chris knew what was coming—tears, quarreling, and decisions forced from him, and an end to the old happy life, that had gone on in sweet content for twenty years.

The things he feared came to pass quickly enough. The captain of the *Easter Bell* was, of course, a passionate partisan of his mate's position. He permitted the lad to leave the ship, and did his work for him. For any soldier who was interfering with any sailor's sweetheart was a personal enemy of Sam Bowes. So the rivals met constantly in Bell's parlor, and undoubtedly they did their best to be offensive to each other. The captain had the soldierly instinct to "hold his ground." He had the conviction that Easter's father favored him, and the satisfaction of reflecting that Tom's ship sailed

in twenty-seven days, and that women were naturally fickle. Tom *knew* that Easter loved him, and this knowledge gave him confidence, and a degree of patience that would not have been possible without it.

In ten days the tacit fight had become of general interest to the sea-going people. It had assumed a caste color. It was soldier against sailor ; and Chris felt that if he any longer favored the soldier, he would become an object of scorn to his old shipping associates. But he could not rid himself of Peel, for the young soldier was roused on every side ; he could not bear the idea of defeat, and he was animated by that pride of class and money which simply would not believe that love counted such things as less than nothing. Hour by hour the popular interest grew. The appearance of the handsome sailor on his way to Easter's house was the event of the day. Skippers' wives and daughters espoused his cause with the passionate unreason of women. The matrons openly wished him "good luck." The maids peeped over their blinds and gave him a smile of encouragement. It was a family matter in every sailor's family.

They had been rather proud, even in their envy, of one of the Peels coming to seek a wife in the sailor's quarter. His martial show, his haughty bearing, had hitherto blinded them to his personal faults. But their eyes were now opened. One woman asserted he was a "bad lot ;" another, that "there was something about the fellow that would make any good girl fear him." So the soldier going

to woo the sailor's sweetheart went always through an enemy's country.

In the third week, after a very irritating hour in Easter's presence, Peel said some unpardonable words to Tom Breton when they left it, and Tom knocked him down. It was on the street, and the women in all the neighboring houses saw it. Windows flew up; opinions were freely uttered; and when Tom left his prostrate foe, and, with head erect, walked off toward his ship, he was encouraged by a sensible murmur of admiration. In a few moments Peel lifted himself to his feet, and, with a slight stagger and a rattle of his side-arms, took the opposite road, amid the scornful laughs and jeering words which the fish-wives and street-urchins sent after him. No man could look heroic under such circumstances, and Peel was, moreover, dazed and pallid with the blow; but his feminine enemies were not capable, in their temper, of making such allowances, and they mockingly compared his appearance with Tom's glowing face and brave, up-head manner.

Easter was weeping bitterly in her own room. She was ashamed of, and much distressed by, this open quarrel for her favor; and Tom, in order to please her, had borne and borne until further patience was out of the question. Even then he had waited until he had Peel upon the street, where, unrestricted by Easter's presence, it was easy to give him the few strong words and the downright blow which he richly deserved. But what was to come of it? In ten minutes a dozen people had carried the news to

Chris. The father set his lips and said nothing. The time had come to act.

He worked a little longer at his desk and then shut it with a snap and left the shop. On his way home he met a certain Dick Lloyd, a comedian of rare power who ought to have been at the top of his profession, but who was not there. Lloyd had seen the encounter, and he went through the quarrel with inimitable cleverness. Chris was sure he meant to stir the theatre to uproar with it that very night. They spoke awhile together and then went into the actor's house, where Chris remained a long time. It was almost opposite his own house, and when Chris left Lloyd's he went directly home,

He found Easter sick with trouble. "She would be talked about still more," she said, "and she had already been in every one's mouth. She wanted to go away." She begged her father to send her away. She did not mind to what place, only out of sight and sound of the women who would not let her have her lover in peace. Chris was shocked at the suggestion. How could he let his tenderly cared-for little girl go into the cold world? Who would comfort her in trouble? If she was sick, she might die without help. Besides, a woman alone in a strange place cannot do right—cannot be right. If she was an angel sent in human form to do some special heavenly business, she would be under suspicion. No! decidedly no! Chris would not send his Easter from home.

"Then," said Easter, "let me marry Tom. I love Tom Breton, and I can never, never, love any one

else. I hate Captain Peel, and I always, always, always shall hate him."

"Wait until Tom comes back next Easter," urged Chris.

"I want to marry Tom now, and put a stop to all this trouble."

"A poor, bad reason for marrying, if that is all."

"I love Tom, and I want to marry him before his ship goes out again."

"Wait one year, my dear child—just one year. I must have time to consider. I cannot offend my best friends—everybody is unreasonable now. Wait till you can decide sensibly."

"I must marry Tom now, or I must go away from here."

The interview was prolonged until both father and daughter were worn out, and weeping; then, in desperation, Chris said angrily:

"There must be time, Easter—there must be time given, or taken. I will not have your life settled in a passion and a hurry. You are in no condition to say what you desire. There must be time. There must be time made some way—" and so saying he went out of the house.

She watched him cross the street, and Mr. Lloyd coming out of his house at the same time, they stopped and spoke, and she saw Lloyd write a "pass" for the play and give it to her father. It was an ordinary favor, and Easter scarcely noticed it. Chris did not come home to his tea; that was an unpleasant circumstance, and Easter was worried at it; but when supper-time arrived, when she

saw Lloyd return from the theatre, and her father was still absent, she was suddenly smitten with a wild fear and excitement. It was then near midnight. After a few moments' thought she called the servants and took one with her to Lloyds. The actor was awake. He said he had given Chris a "pass," but did not see him at the theatre. She begged him to go to the quay and alarm Captain Bowes and Tom Breton, and he went very gladly.

Nothing had been heard of Chris at the ship, and Tom went to the police station. Lloyd went back to Bell's home. Chris was still absent. A servant had told a neigbbor, and she had told another neighbor, and the whole street was alive with wonder and anxiety; and when a policeman visited Bell's house, and then went across to Lloyd's, every one felt that further sleep was impossible. Many of the women made a cup of tea, and sat down in twos and threes to discuss the strange affair. By noon next day the maritime part of the town was in great excitement. Chris Bell was the foremost man of the quarter; his store was the gathering-place of the ship-men. But no one could discover whether he was alive or dead. The man, after speaking to the actor Lloyd on the street, might have sunk into the ground. Easter and four others had seen the two men together, had seen the "pass" written and given, had seen Lloyd go gesticulating down the street, as was his habit; but no one had noticed the direction in which so ordinary and familiar a figure as Chris Bell went. The mail-coach routes, the shipping list, the livery stables were all equally dumb regarding

any one resembling the missing man. Every day added to the mystery of his disappearance, and Christopher Bell was apparently as much lost as a stone dropped into mid-ocean.

CHAPTER II.

"He seeks
Like one who searched the world
For some lost friend."

"Life tied in a knot."

"In a happy haven."

Trouble! Trouble! Where is the wall that will keep it out? And yet it was a new experience to Easter. For in the sheltering care of her father's love she had sung away the morning of life; the happy morning of life and May. But as a frost gives a sudden ripeness to grain and fruit, so this sharp sorrow and anxiety turned the thoughtless, immature girl at once into a self-reliant, unselfish woman. Love may be blind, but Sorrow opens his eyes; and Easter had a sharp revelation of her selfishness. She had not suspected its presence before her father's loss; after it, she probably accused herself beyond reason.

When Captain Peel called next upon her, he found it difficult to say to the pale, resolute woman the words he had come to say. And she listened to them with indignation.

"How can you talk to me of love and happiness?" she asked. "I care for no one but my dear father. Until he is found, I will not see you again. If I have not father's love, I will have no other love."

"I have written to London for a special detective; if, with his aid, I find your father, will you listen to my love then, dear Easter?"

"Can you bargain with a child about her father's life? I will not listen to you. Do not come here again. I will give no one occasion for reproach. My own heart is all I can bear."

"I will defend your good name with my name."

"I will take care of my own good name. I stand now for my father's good name as well as my own;" and then a look came into her face, as if she had clasped her heart tight like a shut book, and the captain went out with a flushed countenance and a haughty bow, but still muttering, as he went quickly down the street:

"Proud! Proud! Proud! And her head carried like a queen's! And she will have—forty—thousand—pounds! And that beggar of a sailor wanting her and it! By St. George, I will stick to the point I have won, at any rate!"

Tom Breton, without planning the matter, took a much more effective way to gain Easter's good will. In an open boat he traversed for three days all the sea around the locality. He knew the set of the tides, and he watched the shores, in case Chris had been drowned. He visited the adjacent villages, and spoke the incoming ships. Nothing was discovered, but Tom did not therefore relinquish the search.

He felt that it was impossible to leave Easter in such trouble, and Sam Bowes agreed with him ; so a substitute was procured, and the *Easter Bell* went to the Chinese seas that year without Tom Breton.

When she had sailed, and Tom's resignation was beyond Easter's denial, he called upon her. He had always thought her the loveliest woman on earth, but sorrow had given a deeper meaning and a nobler air to her beauty. The fondest words were in his heart, but something in Easter's manner stayed them at his lips. He could only look at her and be silent. Then Easter began to weep.

"Tom," she said, and the words seemed wet with sorrow—"Tom, I know all you want to say ; but I cannot listen. If I have not father's love again I will have none other. When I remember how he loved me, I am heart-broken. If he be dead, Tom—"

"No, Easter, he is not dead. I am sure he is alive."

"I feel, Tom, as if love were all behind me ; as if I had drifted where I should never find love again !"

"No, no, dear ; and, please God, your father will come back to us yet. I am on the mast-top, Easter —on the look-out—morning, noon and night."

And his face, full of love and hope, besought Easter ; and she cried out softly, and the tide of a woman's love rose and rose, and carried her off her feet ; and, without knowing how, she had drifted into Tom's arms, and he had kissed her.

But there were no words of love spoken, and when Easter said : "Leave me now, Tom, and when

you come again bring me good news," Tom went without demur. But he had that light and look which only comes on a man's face when he feels earth and heaven within his arms; and there was in his heart the "go" for any impossible thing—even for the daily wearying search that seeks and never finds.

After some weeks had passed, Chris Bell's lawyer produced his will. It bequeathed his entire property to his daughter, and ordered his business to be continued for twelve months under the management of his chief clerk, John Chisholm, who was to liquidate all claims, and dispose of its stock and goodwill to the best advantage. Chisholm had a perfect understanding of this arrangement, but he tacitly declined to carry it out, for he believed, also, that Chris Bell was alive, and would return to his home.

Nor did this faith materially waste during the long days and weeks in which there was not a shadow of hope to keep it alive. Chrisholm opened the desks every morning with the thought, "He may come to-day;" for he adopted Tom Breton's theory—that Chris had taken an open boat to go to the ship-building yards, that he had by some accident lost his oars and been carried out with the tide, and rescued by a vessel going either far, far east or west. It is true, Chris might, in such case, have written; but Tom was eloquent on the difficulty of posting letters at sea. He remembered how often, when ports were touched, yellow-fever would not let a man go ashore; how often, when letters were sent ashore by agents, they were forgotten alto-

gether ; how often a contrary fate followed a letter, and it went everywhere but where it ought to go etc., etc.

And these two hopeful men did influence Easter, though she kept within her home, and only in going to and from church was her sad, fair face seen upon the street. There was a large garden at the back of the house, and in it she walked and found enough of employment to prevent her health from suffering. Every Sunday night, also, Mr. Lloyd called to inquire if there was any service he could render ; and on other nights some one of the half-dozen theatrical people who kept bachelor homes with him paid her the same attention. One old man, who, Lloyd said, played "the cruel father in dramas," came the oftenest. Sometimes he brought her a play-bill, or an orange, or a flower, and Easter thought he looked as little like a cruel father as he looked like a handsome lover.

At first these lodgers of Lloyd's had been suspiciously watched, and their occupations during the hours immediately after Bell's disappearance had been carefully investigated. They had been proved to be very innocent. Lloyd himself was at the Theatre Royal. The lodger who played the *Romeos* had been answering his numerous love-letters ; the "cruel father" had been learning a new part ; the property-men cooking their dinner ; the housekeeper entertaining a neighbor to a cup of tea. But as Lloyd had been the last man known to have spoken to Christopher Bell, these kindly people felt as if his daughter had some claim on their attention.

So the weary summer passed away. The dark, stormy nights were at hand, and Tom knew his boat search would soon be at an end. One afternoon, a man working on the quay said that a sailor had come into port the previous day who told a story of their picking up a man when outward bound, who had subsequently died at Calcutta of cholera. The sailor's home was at a little village four miles down the coast, and Tom instantly procured a boat and pulled there with all speed. He found that the rescued person had been a boy ten years old, and with a feeling of relief he turned homeward. As he was untying his boat, the old actor who lived at Lloyd's and played "cruel fathers" asked to go back to Fairport with him.

"I am wanted to-night," he said, "and if I have to walk I'll be quite done up."

Tom said "it was going to storm, but he was welcome to take his chance."

It was growing dark, and they spoke little, but the old man at last asked:

"Don't you often go on a wild-goose chase, Mate Breton?"

"Perhaps. I'll get on the right track some day."

"Is the old sailmaker worth the trouble?"

"You didn't know Chris Bell?"

"Yes, I did."

"Then be ashamed to ask such a question."

"You liked him, I suppose?"

"Ay, I like him well yet—that is why I seek him."

"I thought, maybe, it was because you loved his daughter."

"Stop there. I don't talk of his daughter, and I don't let anyone else talk of her;" then angrily: "If you wasn't such an old man, I'd give you a lesson."

"I say no wrong of Chris Bell."

"Nobody can say wrong of him. Let your betters alone, old man; and here comes the storm, with us not far from the Liddy rocks, and a ten-knot tide raking them. If our boat touches, she'll be turned to matches in no time."

The actor did not answer. He understood what to do, and he did it, keeping his face turned to the little streak of dead, dirty daylight in the west. And very soon the seas washed them continually, the rain thrashed like whips; the wind was bitterly cold.

"We are in a bad place," said Tom.

"You'll make harbor where another could not look at it."

And so Tom did, watching the waves and the nick of time, and then up with the helm, and a lift and a leap, and over the bar like a thunderbolt, and into still water.

"You are a *man* and all of a *man*, Tom Breton!" said the poor actor, in a kind of triumph; and then as he straightened painfully his wet limbs: "If you will do me a favor, I will do you one."

Some tone in the voice spoke strangely to Tom's heart,

"All right," he answered. "What can I do? See you home?"

"I can get home, dark as it is. But come in an hour or two, and talk to me. Come! Do come!"

"Are you not going to the theatre?"

"No. I won't do any acting to-night. Come at nine o'clock."

"All right. I'll come."

When they got out of the black darkness into the quay light, the old man disappeared while Tom was tying the boat. Really, Tom cared little about him. He had promised to call out of simple good nature, and was vexed at himself for the promise when the time came to keep it. But he went, though it was raining heavily and the streets were dark and dreary. So was Lloyd's house; it looked deserted; but there was the glimmer of a candle in Easter's parlor, and he could look at her shadow while he waited for admission.

In a few moments he heard a quick step coming down the uncarpeted stairs; there was a show of light, and the door was opened wide. A man stood within it, shading the flaring candle with his hand, and the man was Chris Bell! He asked Tom inside with a gesture, and without a word they went up the stairs together, Tom shivering with terror. He believed he saw Chris Bell's ghost, and that penetrating horror of what has been mortal and is no longer mortal, which made the hair of Eliphaz stand upright, thrilled Tom Breton with an inconceivable awe. But though his heart was heavy as lead at his feet, he went steadily on. The man—dead or

alive—entered a room full of fire and candle-light, and then turned with a smile, put both his hands on Tom's shoulders, and looked him squarely in the face.

"My heavens!" whispered Tom, in a fervor of joy and gratitude; "it *is* Chris Bell!"

"It is, indeed, Tom. Sit down. Ask me anything you want to know, Tom."

"Where have you been, Chris?"

"*Here*, in *this house*, Tom."

"All the time?"

"Except two weeks, when I was in London."

"Oh, Chris, how could you! In London, too?"

"I went to London to see Captain Peel at home. I saw him, and very badly I thought of him. He took me for a detective; I told him I was one and that was no lie. I asked him to let me find Chris Bell, and he said he hoped the old fellow was forty fathoms below daylight. But he offered me gold to find or *make* a good case against an impudent, beggarly sailor called Tom Breton. I asked him what kind of a case; and he said: 'I could make him break any commandment I thought bad enough to send him off to Botany Bay.' I've a dozen letters from him here to prove it. And, moreover, he told me to keep a watch on my own child, and let him know all she did. I have the letters, and I can snap my fingers at 'Peel & Sons' now, Tom."

"Why do you care for them at all?"

"I made a lot of money through them, and old Martin always let me feel as if he had a kind of right in it. I fancy they had come to look on all my

savings as belonging to them, and Captain Peel was chosen to heir them. And they have a deal of power here, Tom. I had got used to considering their opinions. I knew if I gave my Easter to any one else they would feel themselves robbed, and do their best to ruin me. So, when you knocked the popinjay down, and Easter would not listen to reason, I could see no way out of the trouble but by getting time. Time always brings some change or other."

"But who put it into your head to hide in this house, and how did you do it?"

"Fred Lloyd. Just as I left Easter, half distracted, I met him, and he spoke to me about your quarrel with Peel. I was full of sorrow, and I talked it over with him. I said I must send Easter away, and that it broke my heart to do so. He answered:

"'Why not go yourself, Chris? And you needn't go out of sight of your own home. Come into my house, and I'll show you a way to find the bottom of this matter.' I went in, and he showed me how the voice could be altered, and the face and figure changed beyond recognition, and he said: 'Come and live in this room. I'll engage you to play with me; you can watch all, and judge all, and at the right time come back again.'

"I thought well of the plan. It would keep Easter in her own home; it would prevent me taking any part in the quarrel; it would put off Easter marrying any one. I knew Chisholm could manage without me. I thought it would give Easter time to find out what a loving father was worth; it would test

both her lovers; and surely the happiness of her whole life was worth a few weeks' or months' anxiety. Well, Tom, the more I thought—and I had to think quick—the better the scheme looked; and perhaps I was a bit of a coward, too, and perhaps I was a bit curious; no man works from a single motive, and mine were more numerous than is worth telling. But I am not sorry for anything I have done; not even for going on the stage a few times to keep up the character I had assumed. For Lloyd says I spoke my words quite wonderful. But I was bringing things to a crisis when I met you to-night. My lad, I've watched you all this summer. You did your duty. And if Easter is in the same mind she was in last April, I'll no longer keep a good husband from her, and a good son from myself."

"Let us go to Easter."

"It is too late now. Wait until the morning."

"Ah, no, Chris! I cannot wait. Come! Come! Poor little Easter! Don't you want to kiss her?—to hold her in your arms?—to look into her eyes?"

"Tom, I do. I won't wait another moment. Poor little Easter! There, now, be reasonable. I am too old to take twenty steps at a time, Tom."

It was still raining, but neither of the men felt it; and in a few moments the knocker of Bell's door fell in the three prompt, even strokes that had always been his summons. Easter, who was partially undressed, was heart-startled; her very breath was arrested by the familiar sound. There was a little delay, and then the drawing of bolts, and the stir of men's feet in the hall. She threw a cloak over her

shoulders, and stood a moment to listen ; then barefooted, with her long hair unbound, she flew down the stairway straight into her father's arms. She did not see Tom, for he stood back in the shadows, brimful of joy watching the happy meeting.

It might be night elsewhere, but there was no night in Chris Bell's house. Maids were called and fires lighted, and supper cooked, and the three glad hearts garnered their delayed harvest of love. And there was so much to tell, and so much to explain, that the late winter dawn found them still unwearied, and still full of affectionate curiosity. But only to Tom and Easter did Chris explain anything. To all inquiries and exclamations he simply said : " He had been away on important business." And wonder and enthusiasm soon dies in an atmosphere of cold indifference, especially when its cause is many months old. Probably Martin Peel was the only stranger to whom Chris spoke more confidentially, for there was no business and no friendship between the firms after Bell's return. Both men preserved a rigid reticence concerning the other, and the captain did not visit Fairport again for many years.

Chris had hoped that Tom would be content to stay on shore after his marriage, but the sea was the lad's vital air, and he could not keep away from a ship. So Chris built a new *Easter Bell*, that was to make the short voyage to Norfolk, Virginia, to bring tobacco for the Kendal snuff factories. And in this ship there were spacious accommodations for Tom's wife, whenever she chose to take the Atlantic voyage with him. So that if Tom and Easter had had a

—xvii.—"The Mate of the [illegible]"

hard, anxious summer they had a double measure of delight all through the winter. Indeed, between the new ship and his sweetheart, Tom thought himself the happiest man on earth, while Easter sang as she made her bride-clothes, and lifted a face like sunshine to her father and her lover.

The marriage was fixed for Easter Monday, because Sam Bowes was to be Tom's best man. And as if the ship and Sam knew all about it, and felt the hurry of so important an event, the *Easter Bell* came into port a week before her usual time; so that Sam had an opportunity to procure the most wonderful of white duck trousers, and dark-blue coat, while not even the bridegroom's necktie had such long, flowing ends, or was tied in such a perfect true-lover's knot. Indeed, there had never been in Fairport a marriage so truly popular.

The wedding-peal rang up the town at the dawning of the day, and the whole sailors' quarter was in the street and in the church, to see the bride pass in her lustrous white silk, with the bride-vail covering her fair face, and knots of violets and white hyacinths at her breast and in her hands. Easter peals and wedding-peals alternately filled the fine clear air, and the sunny streets were crowded with children carrying gayly colored Easter eggs, and youths and maidens in their Easter garments, smiling and sighing with love and expectation, and men and matrons kindly reminiscent of their own wooing and wedding. Such was Easter's and Tom's marriage morn, and every one, when they saw them, blessed them.

POSTSCRIPT.

These things happened fifty years ago, and I had little thought I should ever hear of Tom Breton again in this world. But last Easter a dear friend of my childhood was in Fairport once more, and she sent me these happy words about the mate of the *Easter Bell:*

"I was just in time to see Tom Breton lift the anchor of life for his last long voyage. He was near eighty years old, and was sitting in a large chair, surrounded by his sons and daughters and grandchildren *only*, for his little Easter had gone to the 'land very far off' a year ago. His face was solemn and peaceful, and we thought he was scarcely conscious, but just at the last moment he lifted himself erect, made the motion of striking the ship's bell with his hand, and sang out, in clear, ringing tones: 'A fine, starry night—and *All's well!*'"

THE HARVEST OF FAITH AND CONSTANCY.

Under the shadow of a great fig-tree a young girl sat, in a deep reverie. Such a tender light was in her eyes, such a sweet smile of full satisfaction on her face, that a stranger would certainly have said: "She is thinking of her lover." But no lover had Mabel Rae, and her pleasure sprang from a far less dangerous scource—from the handful of tuberoses in her lap. Their spiritual, dreamy beauty and rare, rich perfume always held her as in a spell of measureless content. To breathe their odor was to fill her soul with holy and tender thoughts, and the lovely waxen flowers, pale, pure and white as moonshine, haunted her heart and imagination, and received from her a perpetual love and worship.

There she sat until the heat and stillness of the tropic noon drove her to the house, a grand old home hid among giant liveoaks gray with the solemn waving southern moss. She went first to the large dim parlors, intending to put her favorites among the damp moss of the hanging-baskets; but the dreamy languor of the darkened room overcame

every desire but that of sleep, and she lay down on the nearest couch, holding her flowers in her hands.

Half an hour later, Mr. Rae opened the door and ushered in a gentleman who had accompanied him from New Orleans.

"Sit down, Allan," he said. "I will soon arouse the house. You see, it is the hour for siesta, and I believe all take it at the same time when I am away."

For a few minutes the young man believed himself alone. The subtle, powerful perfume—quite unknown, but delicious beyond expression—was his first sensation. Then, as his eyes became accustomed to the dim light of the carefully closed jalousies, he saw a picture that he never more forgot —a most lovely girl, in the first bloom of maidenhood, fast asleep on the silken cushions piled on a low divan. Her white robes made a kind of glory in the darkened corner. One hand had fallen down, and the flowers gemmed the carpet at her side; the other lay across her breast, as if embracing the tuberoses which it had scattered there.

Never in all his native mountains, never in any dream of love or fancy, had Allan Monteith seen a woman half so fair. Almost entranced, he stood gazing on Mabel as if he had "seen a vision." There lay his destiny asleep; he knew it, and opened his whole soul to welcome "Love's young dream." But when Mr. Rae, followed by a negro valet, returned, and Mabel languidly opened her great, pensive eyes, and stretched out her arms for her father's embrace, Allan almost thought he

should faint from excess of emotion, and it was with difficulty he controlled himself to receive the introduction and apologies necessary.

Allan Monteith was a young Scotchman, the only son of a gentleman with whom in early life Mr. Rae had formed a most ardent friendship. Allan was rich, and by nature and birth equally noble; but he was utterly devoid as yet of any experiences but such as his college and his mountain home had brought him. Nevertheless, he was not destitute of the traditional business capacity of his house, as some late transactions in cotton and sugar in New Orleans had proven to Mr. Rae. And partly because he liked the young man, and partly as a matter of interest, he had invited him to his home among the woods and lagoons of the Evergreen bayou. Mabel, in this transaction, had scarcely been properly considered; but to her father she was yet a child. True, he recognized her wonderful beauty, and was very proud of it; he knew, too, that she possessed an exquisite voice and great skill in music, and the passing idea of showing his pearl of price to the foreigner rather flattered his vanity than alarmed his fears. He did not dream that he was introducing a new claimant for its possession.

Yet so it proved. Allan lingered as if in an enchanted castle till he had no life, no will, no hopes but those which centered in Mabel Rae. And she, innocent and impressible, soon returned his passion with a love even more absorbing and far less selfish than her lover's.

"Oh, the sweet, warm, love-laden days in those

solemnly shaded woods! Oh, the blissful hours in the cool evenings, when the perfume of tuberoses and jasmine and oleanders filled the air! When the soft, calm moonlight glorified every lovely and every common thing. It was like a dream of those days when the old rustic gods reigned, and to live was to love, and to love was to be happy.

With the fall, however, there came imperative letters from Scotland, and Allen could no longer delay. Love has its business as well as its romance, and this side was not so satisfactory. Mr. Rae would hear of no engagement for two years, by which time, he said, he hoped to be able to give Mable such a fortune as would make her acceptable in the eyes of Allan's father. But for the present he absolutely declined to look upon the young people's attachment as binding on either side.

"In less than two years, when the first tuberoses bloom, I will be here again, Mabel, darling," were Allan's last whispered words, as he held her tenderly in his arms and kissed again and again the face dearer than all the world to him. And Mabel smiled through her tears and held the last tuberose of the summer to his lips for a parting pledge.

But the two years brought many and unexpected changes. That very winter the first war-cloud gathered, and long before Allan could redeem his promise the little inland plantation was desolate and deserted. Mr. Rae had gone to the war, and Mabel boarded in a ladies' school in New Orleans. These were but the beginning of sorrows. Another year found her an orphan, and cruelly embarrassed

in money affairs. Claimants without number appeared against the Rae estate, and creditors forced the plantation into the market at the most unfavorable time. She was driven from her home in strict accordance with the letter of the law, but she felt and knew, though powerless to prevent it, that she had been shamefully wronged.

Poverty is a grand teacher, however, and had many learned disciples; and now, for the first time in all her life, Mabel thought for herself and dares to look the future in the face. She had promised her father never to write to Allan without his permission, but she considered that death annuls all contracts, and surely now, if ever, it was Allan's duty to befriend and care for her. So she sent him word in a few, shy, timid sentences of her sorrow and loneliness. But it was doubtful if ever the letter would reach him; mails in those days were not certainties; and even if it did reach Allan, it was still more uncertain whether he could reach Mabel.

And in the meantime she must work or starve—a blessed alternative in great sorrows, I say. People who have to fight "a sea of troubles" do not go mad. *Work*, the oldest of all preached evangels, is the consoler and brings them through. And though Mabel Rae could command no higher position than that of a nursery governess, yet she found in it a higher life than ever the dreamy, luxurious selfishness of her father's home had given her.

Her employers were of the ordinary class. I can weave no romance out of them. They felt no special interest in Mabel, neither did they ill-use

her. She was useful and unobtrusive, and asked neither for sympathy nor attention. No letter came from Allan Monteith, though she waited and hoped with failing heart and paling cheeks for more than a year. She had not the courage to write again, and her anxiety and distress began to tell very perceptibly on a naturally frail constitution. Then a physician advised her to try at once a more invigorating climate, and she not unwillingly agreed to accompany the invalid wife of an officer returning to her home in New York.

This was the dawn of a brighter day for Mabel. She found friends even if she did not find health, and her rare beauty and wonderful musical talents soon procured her the admiration of a large and influential circle. By the advice of her friend, she established herself in a fashionable locality and commenced the teaching of music. I think few women could have been more successful. Part of this was undoubtedly due to the social power of her friend; but neither this nor her own loveliness and winning manners would have been sufficient, without the genuine knowledge of her art and that wonderful voice which charmed all who heard it.

So, in the second winter of Mabel's residence in New York, it became "the thing" to invite Miss Rae to preside over select social and musical entertainments. I have a friend who met her during this season frequently, and who describes her tact and influence as something extraordinary and magnetic. Her rare beauty was undiminished, though more thoughtful and *spirituel* in character;

her dress was uniformly the same—a pale pink lusterless silk, with tuberoses in her hair and at her breast, for her passion for these flowers was stronger than ever; and when they were to be procured, at any trouble or cost, her little room was always full of their peculiar fragrance.

During this winter Mabel had many lovers, and report said, more than one excellent offer of marriage, but she quietly ignored or else decidedly refused all advances. Her heart was still with the tall, fair mountaineer who had won it amid the warmth and perfume of tropic noons and moonlit nights; and though twice two years had passed, she refused to believe him false.

She was right. Allan deserved her fullest faith. Her letter had never reached him, and yet he had with incredible difficulty made his way to New Orleans, only to find the Rae plantation in the hands of strangers, his friend dead, and Mabel gone, none knew whither. After a long and dispiriting search, he left Mabel's discovery in the hands of well-paid agents, and returned to Scotland almost broken-hearted at the destruction of all his hopes.

But he still loved her passionately, and often in stormy nights, when the winds tossed the tall pines like straws and mountain-snows beat at barred doors and windows, he thought of the happy peace and the solemn silences in which he and his love had walked, listening only to the beating of their own hearts or the passionate under-notes of the mocking-birds. Often, both in sleeping and waking dreams, he saw again that dim parlor and the beautiful girl

sleeping on the silken couch; and with these memories there always came the same sensation of some delicate perfume in the air. Far away, amid the heather and the broom and the strong fresh breezes of the North Sea, he was visited by the breath of the tropic woods, and the fragrance of the tuberose and the memory of his lost Mabel were one and indivisible in his heart.

Thus two walked apart who should have walked hand in hand, and it seemed as if the years only widened that breach over which two souls looked longingly and called vainly. But there are ills which happen for good; and I think any one who would have taken the trouble to analyze the gain in character which this separation and struggle produced would have said so.

For, after five years of battle with life, Mabel was no longer a lovely, impulsive, thoughtless child; she was a noble woman, beautiful in all the majesty of completed suffering. And Allan's whole nature had swelled under the influence of a mighty and unselfish love, as seas swell under the influence of the sun and moon.

If we wait, however, the harvest of the heart *will come.* One day early in the winter, Mabel got a note from a friend, announcing her return from abroad, and begging her to be present at a small informal reunion at her house that evening. She went early in the day, and spent the afternoon in that pleasant gossip which young and happy women enjoy. Her hostess rallied her a good deal upon her growing years, and laughingly advised her to secure a young

Scotchman with whom they had a pleasant acquaintance in their travels, and who was now in New York and going to spend the evening with them.

Did Fate knock softly on Mabel's soul then? For she blushed violently; and instantly, as if by magic, there sprang up in her heart a happy refrain which she could not control, and which kept on singing:

"*He comes! He comes! My lover comes!*"

She dressed with more than ordinary care, and was so impatient that her toilet was completed before others had begun. So she sat down in the unlighted parlors, saying to herself:

"I must be still. I will be calm. For how should I bear a disappointment, and what ground of hope have I? Absolutely none but that he comes from the same country. *No; there is no hope!*"

But still, above the doubt and fear, she could hear the same chiming undertone:

"*He comes! He comes! My lover comes!*"

She became nervous and superstitious, and when the silence was broken by a quick ring and a rapid footstep, she rose involuntarily from her chair, and stood trembling and flushing with excitement in the middle of the room. Ah, Mabel! Mabel! your heart has seen further than your eyes. *Allan has come at last.*

"Ah, my darling! my darling! My fair, sweet flower, whose perfume has followed me o'er land and sea, I have found you again at last!" exclaimed Allan, as he clasped Mabel to his bosom.

And so Mabel's winter of discontent and sorrow was over. Never more did she have grief or pain

unsoothed or uncomforted. I only wish I could close as the old fairy tales do and say: "So they lived happy ever afterward." But, alas! Though a lovely Mabel Monteith, with her father's heir and her mother's eyes, makes light and gladness in Allan's home, the far dearer one has gone "to the abodes where the eternal are."

In a little country church-yard, not twenty miles from New York, the beautiful Mabel Rae "sleeps the sleep that knows no waking." Half the year round you would know her grave by the delicate odor of the tuberoses with which it is covered; and even when snows cover it, and wild winds and rains beat over its senseless turf, one noble heart offers there still the incense of an undying affection.

For, be sure that a *true love* "strikes but *one* hour," and he or she has never loved at all who can say, "I loved *once*." Was Mabel's short life a lost one? Oh, no! Life is perfect in small measures and she left upon the mountain-tops of death a light that makes them lovely to those who shall follow her.

CONSEQUENCES OF A MISTAKE.

"A life in which nothing happens." Such had been mine, at least until my twentieth year, when my aunt died, leaving me the handsome house in which I am now living, in —— street. There was much other property, and no inconsiderable sum of money, besides a pretty little farm twenty miles out of the city. I was in fact a rich woman, and what was still better, a perfectly free one, and I enjoyed my liberty for the first few weeks with all the abandon of an uncaged bird. But as winter came on I grew a little lonely. I had been to my farm, and found it a weariness. Not even the pride of possession could reconcile me to its solitude and monotony. I had tried a watering-place, and the patronage of some and the servility of others had so wounded and disgusted me, that early in September I came back to my home in the city. It had become plain to me, moreover, that some sort of chaperon was necessary, for though I knew I was able to take care of myself, society did not seem to think so; and I had been continually irritated by the constant

proposals of friends to look out for me a suitable person.

But if I was to have an incumbrance I was determined to select it myself, and after some consideration I wrote to my old teacher asking her to accept the position. This scheme had its advantages and its drawbacks, as every scheme has; the advantages being that Mrs. Whitney was a thorough lady, a clever housekeeper, and quite manageable; the disadvantage being that she had a daughter whom I must also take, and whose position it would be difficult to define.

However, the agreement was made: Mrs. Whitney was installed as Lady Propriety, and Rose Whitney as my companion. Then, soon after, the usual round of winter gayeties began, and though etiquette forbade my taking an active part in them while I was in mourning, still I found, in calling, shopping, concerts and lectures, most abundant recreation.

Mrs. Whitney proved invaluable. My house and housekeeping under her management were models of comfortable elegance; but Rose was something of a trial. She was only sixteen, and she was insufferably vain of her pink and white prettiness, and her youthful bloom. I tried, however, to be kind and just to her, for I clothed her handsomely, and took her with me wherever I went. I was careful, too, to avoid anything which might make her feel her position as a dependent; and for these things I think I deserve some credit, for the servitude of one woman to another is generally a very bitter one.

One evening my lawyer called to transact some business with me. He remained to dinner, and proposed after it to take us to hear some famous singer. There seemed to be no reason for a refusal for the night was fine and the moon full; besides, I had no other engagement; so the offer was accepted. As we were going up the wide stairway at Steinway Hall, a gentleman accidentally trod on my dress. He stopped a moment to apologize. My friend recognized him and introduced us. I had heard of Frank Ellers before, and had read many of his contributions to various magazines, so I felt no little pleased and excited at the rencontre. His chair happened to be next mine, and our acquaintance made such progress that I made no objection to his proposal to walk home in the clear frosty night. So Rose and lawyer Denton, and I and Frank Ellers made a very merry party, and I went to bed that night with a strangely happy feeling in my heart.

Next morning he made a formal call, and indeed —though I don't know quite how it happened— before long, he was always calling on some pleasant pretext or another. Rose grew quite familiar with him, and indeed Frank took a great interest in the pretty child, and persuaded me to have her voice cultivated, and to make her practice carefully every day. When New Year's festival came, he made us both presents of equal beauty and value, and I was not jealous, though many girls would have been, but I loved him all the better for his thoughtful and sensitive kindness. Yes, I loved

him. It had come naturally to that; and I felt sure that he loved me; but he was proud and poor, and that closed his mouth.

How swiftly and happily the winter passed! Every night we were together. At first we went much out, but gradually we fell into the habit of spending the evenings in the quiet, comfortable splendor of my own drawing-room. There, hour after hour, I listened to his voice reading the great thoughts of great minds, or blending with Rosa's in some wonderful, mazy German melody. I am naturally reticent where I feel deeply, so I did not say anything of my love or my hopes to Rose, who, indeed, had little sympathy with any subject unless it related to dress or pleasure making, or the admiration which she received on the streets or elsewhere. And her simpering small talk, and silly wonder "what the men all saw in her to admire so much!" was my little daily cross.

But the love in my own heart strengthened, and raised me above every petty annoyance; and when I contrasted my wealth with her poverty, my cultivated intellect with her want of capacity, I did not grudge her what compensation nature had given her in the blond prettiness of her face or the lithe grace of her *petite* figure.

And so spring came again, and then another event happened. Mrs. Whitney, who had been ailing for some weeks, grew much worse, and the doctor ordered her change of air. So I resolved to send her for a few weeks to my farm; and Frank, with his usual kindness, saw everything prepared

for her comfort, and then took her and Rose out there. This was the first break in a charmed length of days which had been all perfect happiness. Every one knows how one change brings another, and therefore I was more sad than astonished when Frank made an engagement which demanded much of his time, and put a stop to our pleasant evening amusements. Still I lingered in the city, staying at home every night, for fear of missing a chance visit from him ; and, as time went on, growing half resentful of his long absences, and more than doubtful as to their necessity. One week about the beginning of May I was unusually lonely and weary, for Frank had disappointed me every night, and I could settle to no work, nor yet make any plans for the summer. All the long warm days, and far into the dusky evenings, I sat doing nothing, thinking, thinking, thinking, thinking the same soft, sad fancies born of love, and such " silken folded idleness."

Saturday morning I roused myself suddenly.

" I will go out to the farm," I said, " and if Mrs. Whitney is able, we will return on Monday, and then go somewhere, anywhere out of New York. If Frank loves me, he will come to seek me ; if not, then the sooner I awake to the truth the better."

After breakfast I still held myself to this resolution, and so I arrived at Woodside farm in time for dinner.

" Mrs. Whitney and Miss Rose were out," the servant said ; " they had gone to the lake, but would be back very soon."

So I went to my room to rest and dress, and be-

ing overcome with the heat and fatigue, fell sound asleep on the large old-fashioned couch. When I opened my eyes it was getting dusk, and there was a pleasant sound of glass and china and other preparations for dinner in the little house; while toward it, borne upon the wind, I heard coming Rose's light laugh and rippling flow of words. I roused myself hastily, and went to the window. Slowly, but merrily, up the little avenue, lined with blossoming cherry-trees, came Mrs. Whitney and Rose—and Frank Ellers.

I was almost shocked; and yet, why should I be? I dressed myself slowly and carefully, feeling just bitter enough to make them all understand I was mistress and must be waited for. Then, when I went down, I was sorry I had done so, for Mrs. Whitney and Rose were so glad to see me, and Frank said "he had been up to —— street in the morning to ask me to drive, and that finding where I had gone, he had made bold to follow."

I asked no questions. I was only too readily satisfied and pleased, though all the evening I noticed Frank was preoccupied and thoughtful. Next day being Sunday, we all went to the little Dutch church in the morning; and, after an early dinner, Rose, Frank and I went to the lake. It was a little sheet of water, of small circumference and narrow width, but it was shaded with trees, and in some places of great depth. I do not know what possessed me, but I suggested a sail. The boat lay at the little jetty quite convenient, and Frank took one oar and Rose the other. As for me, I sat and watched the shad-

ows on the lake and on Frank's face, and listened the while vaguely to their voices, mingling with the sounds of country life and the rush of an approaching train. As it came near, Rose jumped up, in her pretty impulsive way, "to see it shoot in and out among the trees," she said, and somehow—I can't say why or wherefore—but we were all in the water.

Neither Rose nor I could swim, and I was too proud to call Frank. He hesitated just a second, and then he caught Rose. And I heard—well no matter what—it was only two words, but they seemed cruel as a death-warrant. I sank twice before Frank could place Rose in safety and return for me, but I did not feel a bit grateful for his efforts just then; for of course I knew that if the accident had happened further from the shore, I might have drowned while Rose was being saved.

I felt very hard that night, but pride was the shield with which I met this inevitable sorrow and mortification. Both Rose and Frank felt the impossibility of any explanation; acknowledgment was now the only grace left for them. I never asked whether I had been intentionally deceived, or whether in that moment of fearful peril, Frank had first read his own heart. I accepted, as soon as I was able, the truth so cruelly forced on me, and I tried honestly to interest myself in the preparations for their marriage. For I insisted that, if Rose and her mother remained with me until that event, it must take place as soon as possible; for there is a limit to all human patience, and I knew that I should not be able to bear too much of that small

parade with which it was Rose's weakness to invest her love affairs.

It was not, after all my sacrifices, a happy marriage. Mere personal beauty can never satisfy a man of capacity and cultivation, and Frank's home soon became an unspeakable weariness to him, his marriage a captivity without refuge or reputation. He became idle and dissipated, and Rose fretted and complained, and once prevailed on me to see and reason with him. I used my influence with our mutual friend Lawyer Denton, who time and again turned him back on the evil road he had taken, but it was only a temporary brake. *Can* anything effectually stop the downward progress of a man whose wife pushes him on to ruin?

Ten years after his marriage Frank died—I don't wish to say how, but I closed his eyes in a public hospital, and promised him there to take his children and love and care for them as my own. For shame as well as poverty had come to his home. Rose had left him three years before, and of her future life oblivion is the kindest notice. There were three children, a girl and two boys, and I found them a rich legacy. They gave me back my youth, my energy, and my hopes. I had something to love and care for; some one to provide and plan for. And the child-love once planted in my heart grew wonderfully. These three could not satisfy it. I pitied for their sake every naked, suffering little one. I found a more satisfactory way of spending my money than in travelling about trying to find the happiness which can only come to our hearts

through that of others. My farm has become a home for homeless children, and I have found again my own happiness in making happy these poor "unmothered" waifs of sorrow and poverty.

I have done no great deeds; I have written no immortal words; I have made no man's heart glad, or his home happy; but still this one little thing may be said truthfully over my coffin:

"Here sleeps a woman who had no children, but whom many children regretted."

AGNES STIRLING.

"A bill for the relief of Robert Stirling and his men." I was leaning over the ladies' gallery of the Texas Senate Chamber when I heard these words, and saw the change they instantly produced over a somewhat indifferent and uninterested house. *Ennui* kindled into enthusiasm, and debate merged into eulogium, so that the bill was finally passed almost by acclamation.

I heard enough to make me intensely curious, and it was therefore no small pleasure to learn that a party of summer tourists, in which I was included, were to be the first bearers of the news to the old man.

His cottage stood on the outskirts of a large cedar brake. It was in the usual Texas order of architecture—two large rooms, with a wide passage between them. The logs had never been painted or dressed, but a luxuriant white jasmine covered it with an almost supernatural loveliness.

Calm and peaceful it looked without, and yet

within the greatest of all struggles was going on—the struggle of the Eternal out of Time. That it had been a hard one, in Robert Stirling's case, was quite evident. "Many and evil days" was his own history of life, and I read the confirmation in a scarred and sorrowful face, full of gray old miseries.

A number of wild, rough-looking men were sitting in the shade of some mulberry-trees. They spoke seldom, smoked incessantly, and waited with a sad patience for the end sure to come. And when the sun dropped below the horizon their watch was over. They knew it when they saw their captain's only child walk to the end of the piazza and look with great, dry, yearning eyes to where the sun had left a track of glory behind him. There she was joined by some of the oldest of the men, who strove to comfort her.

There was in this woman's face a wonderful charm, the secret of which I discovered afterward. It was partly the sweet gravity of one who had learnt, in the solemn high places of Nature, a joy beyond laughter; and partly that sense of strength and repose which clothes as with a garment those who have fronted sorrow and triumphed over it. In spite of her weariness and grief, and her crowded house, she urged the ladies of our party to accept the shelter of the cabin. And I, who have a taste for civilization, and a perverse inability to see the luxury of a hammock, gratefully accepted it.

The next three weeks, while my friends were making geological and botanical discoveries, I was getting glimpses of a life pure and unselfish enough

for the angels to have desired to look into. I say "glimpses," because I soon found that she did not care to talk of herself, except as incidental to others.

My first interrogatory about any one is generally their birthplace. On this subject I have a theory, and it interests me to see how often truth and surmise agree. But with Agnes Stirling I remained unsatisfied, simply because she did not know herself.

"I was not born here," she told me. "My first memories are of crowds of faces that were not kind to me, of water that seemed to have no end, and of a small vessel, in which we nearly perished."

"We?" I repeated interrogatively.

"That is, my mother and I, and my eldest brother. He was a little baby then, wailing night and day in her arms. He lived to be a noble boy, and to die in her defence."

"But where was Captain Stirling at that time?"

She detected a suspicion of something she did not approve in my voice, and she answered, in a tone that was almost caressing:

"Ah, he was not with us. That was where the misery begun and ended. When we got to him we were very happy."

"Do you remember that?"

"It is impossible that ever I should forget it. After we had been a long time on the water, one morning, just at sunrise, we were put into a little boat and rowed toward the land. A man stood waiting for us—a man whom I had never consciously seen, but whom *I knew at sight.* On all that

bar of lonely sand he was the only living thing. And he looked so handsome and so happy, as he stretched out his arms and shouted to us. I think he will stand just so to welcome me, when I see him next. When our feet touched the land he could not speak for joy, and I remember well that his first action was to kneel down and kiss my mother's hands. I don't understand even now why he did it, but I am sure it was well done. An ox wagon, driven by that old negro you see smoking before the quarters, brought us here. I have no idea how long it took us. I was a silent child, and never asked many questions, and when I saw the green, cool woods, and the strange beauty and wealth of the flowers, I think I believed we were in heaven. One day I found courage to ask Prince, as he was yoking the oxen, if it were so. He looked at me with a kind of reverence. Many a man, wise in his own eyes, would have laughed at my ignorance ; but Prince answered solemnly, ' De little children, Miss Agnes, are allus pretty nigh to de kingdom ob heaven.' I never forgot the look and the words, and I understand them now, though I did not then."

Piece by piece I patched out the years of her childhood, and it made a story startlingly dramatic, and almost incredible to those who have never learnt that adversity sees miracles. But with all its romance, it was still the old story of woman hourly crucifying every selfish thought, and filling her space with lovely deeds and faithful prayers, instead of lingering years.

When Agnes was seventeen years of age, the

tragedy occurred which clouded all her future life. She had then three brothers: Robert, nearly sixteen; Alick, twelve; and Harry, seven. Although fifteen years had passed since its occurrence, she was greatly agitated in its recital.

"It is very hard to speak of it," she said, "but I want you to know all; otherwise much that you hear of my father will seem so savagely cruel. It is, indeed, the only key to that portion of his life with which the public have to do.

"It was on the 24th of October, in the year 1843. There had been slight frosts, and as father was going to the mill, which lay in the river bottom seven miles off, mother proposed that I should go with him, and while the corn was being ground, help to gather some of the winter grapes and pecans which abound in the valley, and to which the frosts had now added the last delicate flavor. I was a little astonished at the proposal, for Robert and Alick generally went on these errands; but I knew mother meant it as a great kindness, more especially as there was butter to make, and both negro boys had gone that morning to the cedar brake for rails.

"The truth was, I had a little trouble of my own at the time—a love affair which my father, wisely I have no doubt, interdicted. For some days I had felt hard toward him in consequence, and my mother's good, wise heart foresaw that a few hours together would put all right. So she brought me a clean dress and my white sun-bonnet, and looked into my face with such an understanding sympathy

that I could not resist the impulse to twice turn back and kiss her. Oh ! I thank God for this memory. Father was pleased at my attention, and smiled kindly at me as I took my place beside him.

" When we got to the bottom of the hill I pushed my bonnet back and looked round. She stood watching us, and shading her face with her hands. Father turned at the same moment, and she waved us a last adieu.

" A very last one as it miserably proved. In less than an hour afterward she was slain by the Comanches, after seeing her eldest boy almost cut to pieces in her defence. Alick and Harry, in the very beginning of the attack, had been bound with rawhides, and given up to the care of two inferior savages.

" And yet that day father was in such wild, gleeful spirits as I had never before seen. Evidently he had no presentiment of any trouble until we reached the bottom of the hill on our return. The absence of all signs of mother or the boys silenced him. In another moment, he had noticed a thin smoke coming from the open door. With a cry and a bound like nothing human, he sprang to the ground. A few minutes told us all our misery. The bodies had been set on fire, but enough remained to identify mother and Robert, and my father guessed only too well the fate of the younger boys.

" The earthen floor and heavy logs had saved the house, but I am sure neither of us at that moment thought of it as a mercy. The negroes were still in the brake, and our only horses with them. But by

nightfall the whole country was roused and following a madman in pursuit of the murderers.

"Some of the neighbors took me away, but I could not stop. If father should come home I knew he would expect me, and my heart was breaking for the dear little fellows whose lot was worse than death. I passed five days alone; they looked like years; and then at midnight two men carried a strange Robert Stirling into his house, raving with brain-fever. I say 'strange,' because no one ever again saw the same generous, kindly, cheerful man who had gone with me to gather nuts and grapes a week before.

"How he suffered for the next three months, when he could do nothing else but suffer, none but God knows. But in half a year he was in the saddle again, at the head of some of the most reckless men in the country. For nearly three years all search was unavailing, but nothing daunted or discouraged him. Only, every time he came home, he came a sterner and a harder man. And soon the wildest stories of his cunning and cruelty and reckless bravery were in every mouth. I do not believe any one blamed him much, and I, I loved him better than ever. And, oh, after Alick was recovered, crippled and dying, and I knew how little Harry had been almost tortured into the grave, there were hours in which I not only pitied but excused him."

"Then you saw one of your brothers again?"

"Yes; father found him with a party of Comanche horse-thieves, in the fourth year of his captivity. They say he took fearful vengeance for the boy's

sufferings. I cannot blame him. Alick lingered many months, and became so dear to me in all those hours of suffering, that I almost wished to die with him, only that it would have been cowardly."

"You think so?"

"Yes, I think so. Who could have taken my place the last year? And then what a joy I should have missed!"

"A joy?"

"Certainly. I have been loved again. All my years of patient waiting and silent prayer acknowledged and answered. I have had many happy days the last seven years, and for more than that time every family in the county has rested in safety under the shadow of my father's name. For a long time he has been a just, as well as a brave man, and I am glad because he lived to know the State acknowledged his services, and provided for his child and friends."

"And what will you do now?"

"Wait. There is always duty. When everything else is gone, duty remains. I could not desert old Prince and Jeff, and the old men who have made this cabin a shelter in sickness and bad weather."

"Is that all you will have?"

"That, *and God.* My solitude is not empty, and I shall find some good to do in every day."

I looked at the calm, strong face, and read in it a sermon not made with hands. "Lo here," it said, "is a woman born for adversity, for she has triumphed over it, and built of it a sanctuary for all that are sorrowful and afflicted."

A Horse for a Wife.

Derring Tower is a fine old manor-house, standing on the cliffs which skirt the boundary line of the Atlantic Ocean, on the coast of Westmoreland. The family are undoubtedly a very ancient one, although they have somehow retained a wonderful faculty for renewing their youth, for a haler old gentleman than Sir John Derring, or a more beautiful girl than his daughter Kate, it would have been hard to find in all the six counties. They were rich too, and riches are rather an uncommon accompaniment to undiluted Saxon genealogy. But I think the fresh strong breezes which they drank in from the sea on one side, and the mountains on the other, had kept the old blood fresh and full of vitality.

At any rate, the proprietors of Derring Tower, a quarter of a century ago, were in no respect behind the year of grace 1847, and the merry company who kept holiday there were well satisfied with their quarters. It was not winter time, but it was quite cold enough to make the fires which filled the great

wide chimneys a necessity, as well as a delight, and the merry hunting-horns, in the chill, frosty mornings, the most inspiriting of music.

Three things the Baronet loved as his life: his daughter, his acres and his horses. The first was a beautiful and affectionate girl, just a little spoiled by unlimited power and unlimited petting, but, after all, no bad example of Tennyson's pretty picture:

> "A rose bud set with little willful thorns,
> And sweet as English airs could make her."

The party gathered at the old Tower this season was an unusually brilliant one, and there was an ample mixture of trim dark riding-habits among the resplendent scarlet coats and white cords of the more legitimate and *business-like* hunters.

Among these fair younger sisters of Diana, Kate Derring was acknowledged

> "Queen and huntress chaste and fair."

And when I have said that her riding was equal to the white Arabian she invariably mounted, I have paid her the highest possible praise. Whether it was the Arabian's fleetness, or her instinct in detecting at once the exact spot in an inclosure where a leap was the easiest, I know not; but at any rate, the white mare and her beautiful rider were leaders in every chase.

And so Kate, in virtue of her splendid riding and her splendid beauty, was this season the heroine of the county. I think she enjoyed it. What girl

with the crown of perfect health and eighteen summers would not?

No one could say definitely who stood the highest in the little queen's grace. Some of her ladies in waiting decided for Antony Derwent, the boldest rider and the handsomest man within a circle of twenty miles. And in the field there seemed good reason for this opinion, for Antony's dark chestnut hunter was generally nearest of all to the white Arabian. But when Wilton carpets became the theatre of action instead of furze and plowed fields, and lamplight, music and conversation took the place of sunshine and the "view-halloo," then Gerald Yorke became the favorite.

I don't think that Kate herself quite knew her own heart. She constantly vibrated, as circumstances placed her lovers in the ascendant. In the field it was Antony; in the hall it was Gerald. Antony was splendid in appearance; Gerald was wonderful in knowledge; but it was neither physical nor mental advantages that finally decided the question.

A few days before Christmas a small party, including Kate and her two lovers, started early in the day for Dalton Hall. It was only a ride of ten miles, but as their object was to bring back pretty Alice Dalton for the Christmas feast, they anticipated some delay while she made the necessary preparations. Kate, in her dark blue habit and cap, with sparkling eyes, and color heightened by the keen fresh air, looked more than ordinarily lovely, and both men, by an almost simultaneous thought,

determined that morning to obtain some sign of preference from her.

As she came though the hall, she stopped among a group of servants busily employed making wreaths and adornments of evergreens. After giving a few directions, she broke off a spray of mistletoe and passed it through the golden brooch that held the neat band of snowy linen at her throat. That spray of glossy leaves and white waxen berries became at once to both men the object of ambition.

Before they were half-way to Dalton, Antony, with all his soul in his eyes, and all his heart on his tongue, was begging for it. While he was pleading, Gerald rode up to her other side, and with impassioned grace and fervor pleaded against Antony and for Gerald. Kate, with a pretty consciousness of power, and by no means ignorant of the deeper meaning which both men attached to her gift, glanced from one eager face to the other with an uncertain and almost frightened look. Then shaking her bridle rein, she fled like the wind from both, sending back, however, this challenge :

" Whoever can catch my Arab wins my flower."

It was a race for a wife, and both men felt it to be so. Men can inspire horses, if they love them, and never did Antony's dearly prized animal respond more nobly to his entreaties. He settled quickly down into long swinging strides which fairly devoured the ground, and followed without the quiver of an eyelash wherever his master's destiny led the way.

Gerald rode a horse whose high temper hardly bore the whip and spur which urged him to his utmost speed. Yet it was evident, if he could control him, the unnatural excitement of the animal was expending itself in a gallop which was at once intensely furious and wonderfully fleet, and which Kate would not be able to endure long, even if her horse could.

At length they came to a long stretch of country at once hilly and rocky, such land as in the dialect of the county is called "scaurs" or "fells" —and very soon Kate's quick ear detected that only one horse was following her. Obedient to her slightest touch, the Arab gathered in her speed and faced her pursuers—pursuer I should say, for at the foot of the hill Antony's horse stood motionless, while his master was stooping with an air of such concern as had evidently for the moment quite obliterated the mistletoe spray.

As she turned, Gerald Yorke touched her bridle rein and passed her. When he was able to control his horse, he returned to claim, with bared head and glowing face, his reward. She handed it to him with such a careless manner and preoccupied face that he felt all the warmth and glow of his success suddenly fade away. Her eyes were full of a vague trouble, and she said:

"Let us return. Something is wrong with Mr. Derwent or his horse."

It was the horse. One of the round stones so abundant on the ground had got into its hoof and caused it to stumble. The animal had cut its knees,

and seemed otherwise in great distress, and this, for Antony, ended at once the race, since it would have been impossible for him to buy his own happiness with any creature's agony. He looked gloomily at his successful rival and sadly at Kate, and then said something in his horse's ear, to which it replied at once with a low, loving whinny.

"You see, Miss Derring, I love my horse. He has carried me since I was but a lad," said Antony, almost apologetically.

And Miss Derring nodded her head, and smiled at him in a way which made his heart beat quicker time than ever it had done before.

"What will you do?"

"Take him to the shepherd's shieling yonder, and send a groom for a surgeon. I am sure you will excuse me."

"I don't think I can." But the tone contradicted the words, and the glance into his handsome, anxious face said more than the tone.

Then she stooped and patted the suffering horse, and spoke gentle, pitying words to it; and after that the gleaming berries in Gerald's button-hole did not hurt Antony's eyes so badly.

By this time the rest of the party had joined them, and a groom was sent back for help, while the remainder of the ride to Dalton was finished in much soberer spirits. Gerald had won, but there was no eclat in his victory, and he felt almost afraid to wear his laurels. An inexplicable change in Kate, a tone, a look indefinable, had dug a gulf between them which he did not dare then to cross. He rode back

to the Tower with Alice Dalton, who declared him to be "the most stupid of men," a verdict which Kate received with an understanding laugh, and a prophecy that Alice would reverse her verdict in less than a week.

Gerald Yorke, however, was no coward, and he found time, as Katie stood dreaming over the blazing fire, waiting for the summons to dinner, to renew the subject. With a woman's tact she pretended not to understand him.

"Did I not give you the mistletoe, Mr. Yorke? I was so confused and frightened when I saw Mr. Derwent unmounted; but I thought I gave it to you."

"Ah, but Miss Derring, I thought—I hoped—I believed that the gift meant—in short—"

"In short, Mr. Yorke, I do not understand 'thoughts,' 'hopes,' 'beliefs,' or 'meanings.' I incurred the forfeiture of my pretty mistletoe branch, and I paid it, I believe."

"Certainly you gave me the branch, but—"

"Then we are quits, you know." And she smiled with such a pleasant, gay indifference that Gerald felt he had been as absolutely refused as if she had said the straightest, most unequivocal *No.*

Mr. Derwent's misfortune was the theme of the dinner table; for though the horse would probably not die, still its efficiency for the field was over; and there was a grave sorrow for his companion's fate in Antony's face which made him wonderfully handsome in Kate's eyes.

After dinner she proposed a game of chess, and

purposely withdrew the table into one of the many cozy, quiet nooks with which the great old-fashioned parlors abounded. The first moves were very silent ones, and I am afraid were such as would have greatly irritated an enthusiastic player. Then Kate lifted the ivory knight, and turning it thoughtfully in her fingers, said :

"I am very sorry about your horse, Mr. Derwent."

"So am I," honestly replied Antony.

"But you can buy another."

"Money cannot buy love, Miss Derring, and 'Baldur' is the only creature in the world that honestly loves me."

"Are you sure of that"

I do not know what there was in Kate's blushing face and soft brown eyes that fired Antony's heart with a new courage. He took up his pleading where Gerald had interrupted him in the morning, and Kate listened as girls listen whose hearts beat time and tune to every glowing sentence.

"But I have no more mistletoe, Mr. Derwent," she answered, with a sweet, shy glance into the honest blue eyes that faced her. "What will do in its place ?"

"Nothing but yourself."

Kate was not astonished, and she did not pretend to be. Very still she sat for one moment, and then with a shy, loving confidence laid her hand in her lover's. There was no need of words. Antony was as well satisfied as if she had said the most unmistakable "Yes."

"Oh, Kate," he said, later on in the evening, "if you really love me now, how could you tease me as you did this morning!"

"Because I did not know that I loved you then. I never found it out until I saw you half crying over poor 'Baldur.' I was actually jealous of the dumb suffering creature, and envied it the love I was sure then you would never more give me. Gerald is wise and witty, and I like to hear him talk. You are very handsome—yes, you are—and I liked to have you love me, but it is *heart* that *wins heart;* and when I saw how tenderly you cared for your horse, I said to myself, 'Beauty and intellect are very well, but a great heart is far better.' And I think the man who is so merciful to his horse will hardly be unkind to his wife."

The answer Antony made was a promise—a promise never once broken, and the prettiest girl in the shire has been happy ever since under the loving protection of the truest and bravest and tenderest of hearts.

A Tale of Two Brothers.

Not far from the busy city of Bradford there is one of those beautiful and silent moors, which add so much to the picturesque beauty of the Yorkshire "Ridings." Over it the sunshine broods lovingly, and seldom does any sound startle its great unbroken spaces, but the almost human cry of the plover. The golden flowers of the broom, the purple bells of the heather blend with every shade of brown and green, and in the wet moss blossoms of rarest beauty may be readily found.

On the outskirts of this moor, just where it touched the rich pastures of Waredale, two brothers lived. The youngest was about twenty years of age; the eldest, at least, eighteen years older. Harry Harkness was as a son to his brother Dick, for he had nursed him in infancy, and watched over his whole life.

They were neither rich nor poor. The house, a low, long, stone building, covered with cherry trees trained over its walls, was Dick's by inheritance, but Harry's by possession, for as baby, boy and man, he

had always ruled all things in it. This night they stood together by the low, stone, garden-wall. Dick saw nothing but the handsome brother he loved so well; Harry saw everything lovely, in sky or earth, from the white moon standing on the peak of Heaven, to the swaying lilac branch his fingers touched. Dick's face was full of an earnest purpose; in Harry's there was only the careless stillness of one to whom the world was *all picture.*

Dick was just a little irritated at his brother's indifference to what he had been saying.

"The offer is a fair one, Harry," he continued, "and if I sell the two Alderneys I can take it up."

No answer.

"Wagoning isn't that bad for a business, and it will keep thee traipsing, fair weather and foul, just as thou lovest to do, lad."

Still no answer.

"It's about time thou stoppedst dawdling about wi' a book o' songs i' thy hand. Why, lad, it's none better than taking. Harry, lad, take Braithwaite's offer."

Before Harry could answer, a figure well known to both brothers rode up out of the gloaming and greeted them. Blessed is the guest met as this one was! There was nothing halt or tame in the welcome that led him up the scented garden-walk and into the clean, comfortable keeping-room. Both brothers considered "the preacher's" coming as equivalent to a settlement of their difficulty, for both had such a respect for his judgment as to be willing to abide by his decision.

"Harry has a fair offer from Abel Braithwaite, sir," said Dick, looking anxiously first at his brother and then at his friend, "and I want him to take it."

"And Harry?"

"Well, he's fettled with bigger notions. He's for books and a city life."

"There is nothing wrong in that, Dick, my son."

Then Harry pleaded well his own cause, and the discussion ended, as Dick had felt sure it would, in Harry carrying his point; though he promised to stay at the farm until steady employment had been procured for him in the city. This was not until the middle of the haying season, when the house was so full and blithe, and nature so lovely, that Harry half regretted the coming of the fate that he had courted.

The more so, when he found himself shut up in a small room, silenced by the imperative voices of a thousand looms, and compelled to give all his faculties to mastering and managing his new duties. However, he soon learnt to take a real pride and pleasure in his work, encouraged wonderfully, doubtless, by the influence of pretty Lucy Aiken. For it happened to Harry and Lucy in the city, as it did to Celia and Jacques in the forest—they had "no sooner met but they looked, no sooner looked but they loved, no sooner loved but they sighed, no sooner sighed but they asked each other the reason why."

If Dick Harkness had had any forebodings for his brother they vanished. He heard nothing but good of him, and every year added to his social

standing and worldly prospects; while it was now well understood that Harry's twenty-fifth birthday was to see him married to the beautiful Lucy Aiken. She had been with Harry once or twice to the farm, and completely won "Brother Dick's" devotion. Her dainty little ways, her silken robes and snowy laces, were wonderful to Dick. He thought her the most lovely creature in the world, and marvelled that she was going to be his sister, though he never thought it strange she should be Harry's wife.

And, gradually, as he saw the end of his cares for Harry, there crept sweetly into his own heart a hope of wife and children, a prospect of seeing the brown eyes of the girl he had long silently loved brighten for him alone. These were the things the brothers dreamt at Christmas, and by the following June the dreams were all to come true.

There are sorrows that come slowly, and we feel their shadows before they fall, And, again, others unroof life in a moment and leave us at the mercy of the tempest. It was in this way Dick's sorrow came. One chill, March morning, with a long, desolate daybreak, and that slow, steady rain that looks so black in the gray dawn—then it was Dick saw a strange man plodding through the treacherous moss; and, because he judged him in danger, went with a kind heart and cheerful face to meet his evil messenger. The man's look was so ominous that Dick's first words were:

"Is Harry Harkness well, man?"

"He's well, lad."

That fear removed, Dick waited until the stranger

and he stood face to face on the hearthstone. A letter was given him, and he took the white messenger of woe to read alone in his bedroom. What voiceless words of woe were they that smote the strong man and made him reel as if drunk with amazement and grief?

"Brother Dick! Brother Dick! I am in prison for forgery, and before God I am as innocent as thou art."

For some moments Dick was speechless, but when he could "give sorrow words" it was just the same bitter cry that went up from old Jerusalem:

"Oh, my brother Harry! My brother! my brother Harry!"

Of course Harry was innocent—Dick never doubted that—but how was he to prove it? All that he could see as yet was that the first and continual necessity would be money. It did not take him long to decide on what must be done, but first he wrote these words:

"No need to tell Dick 'I am innocent.' Thou dear, dear lad! But we must make the world say so too. Don't thee fret, Harry. As soon as I have gotten the money I'll be with thee, and we'll be guilty or innocent together."

Then he saddled his horse, and went a journey bitter almost as that which leads to the grave. He went to mortgage the home that had been his forefathers' for five hundred years. Nay, his love stretched further than that—he went to offer the mortgage to Sibley, of Sibley Hall, his life-long rival, but who, having long coveted the rich acres of

Harkness, was the more likely to make no delay. The business was concluded with speed, for Dick was met by a generous enemy. The master of Sibley, who loved his lands as his own soul, could estimate the mighty love which made Dick Harkness put his title-deeds in jeopardy, and he showed such human sympathy for Dick's position as greatly comforted him.

So that it was with a more hopeful heart he set his face steadily toward York Castle, where his brother was imprisoned. Never backward turned his eyes, though his heart sought its yesterdays with a persistence characteristic of a strong soul suffering. The day in which his dying father laid the new-born child in his arms and bid him be both father and brother to the boy—the night four years afterwards in which he held his mother in his strong arms, and promised her, as she slipped out of them into the grave, that he would "live for," and, "if necessary," "die for little Harry"—the years in which the child had followed him to field and market—his labor and self-denial to give him a good education—the love he had felt in his love—the pride and hope of his later success. These thoughts were but sad companions now, and many a time he dropped his bridle-rein to dash the tears away from eyes little used to shed them; for Dick Harkness was one of those men from whom blood comes easier than tears.

Harry's case was simple enough, and yet hard in its very simplicity. He acknowledged cashing the forged note, but declared that the youngest partner

of the firm in whose employ he was had given it to him, and also received from his hands the whole proceeds. This person denied *in toto* any knowledge of the affair, and there was no evidence to the contrary. What a history was the next few weeks! What journeys Dick took to comfort poor Lucy Aiken—what weary waitings on, and consultations with lawyers—what sleepless nights and anxious days—what misery of cooling friends—what fighting of active foes!

The trial came at last, but by that time Lucy, and Lucy's father, and Dick alone remained of all Harry's friends. Dick had not spared his last sovereign. He had sold cattle and horses and the very furniture of his home. Alas! alas! it was of no avail. If the trial had been in Scotland the verdict would surely have been "Not proven;" but English law knows no half-way house between innocence and guilt, and Harry, in spite of doubts and growing convictions of his innocence, was sentenced to five years penal servitude.

It was Harry who was comforter now, for Dick, on hearing the sentence, had fallen senseless at his brother's side. But Dick, during the past miserable weeks had been daily exhausting his physical and mental strength, while Harry, in silence and solitude, had been gathering that spiritual strength which was to succor and support him for yet many days.

The wonderful love of Dick, "passing that of a brother," had softened every one's heart; and friends that had wavered before the trial never did

after. But nothing delayed the inevitable hour, and Dick had much to do in the interval; for he had determined to leave England with Harry, and be as near to him as circumstances permitted. He did not go empty-handed; many anonymous gifts reached him, and Mr. Aiken and the Master of Sibley each gave one hundred pounds. Gold, prudently used, procured for Harry all that was now possible—a favorable situation, and having used it freely for this purpose, Dick suddenly became possessed with an almost insane desire to accumulate money.

And he prospered. He bought land, and it brought forth gold instead of wheat; whatever he touched turned to gold; he counted his sheep by thousands, and it was scarcely possible to estimate the value of property whose very stones were of precious metal. But three years of this sudden prosperity had greatly changed him. The ruddy-faced, brown-haired youth of the past was become an oldish-looking man, with a gaunt frame, grayish hair, and a stern, silent manner.

One day, in the hot, thirsty streets of Sydney, a man quite unknown stopped him, and said:

"You are Dick Harkness?"

"You are right; what do you want?"

"I can clear your brother Harry."

"Oh, man!" said Dick, grasping the speaker as in a vice. "Oh, man, say that again!"

"I can clear your brother, for I forged the note, and I only received the proceeds."

"You are a devil incarnate whom no suffering could touch. I could slay you where you stand."

"You will be prudent. Remember I can speak or I can forbear; but I want money to escape up the country, and if you give it to me, I will give you a written confession, attested by such creditable witnesses as you may select here, as shall clear your brother's name."

So, after such exasperating delay as the law always exacts, Harry received his exoneration and his release, though only a few weeks before he would have been legally free. Then Dick, with the necessary papers in his hand, went and claimed his brother, and took him home with him; and when they again stood together on the same hearthstone, Dick forgot his Saxon phlegm, and with an Eastern impulsiveness fell on his neck and kissed him.

I think about a year elasped before they were ready to return to their native home without loss. But long before that every newspaper in the country had done justice to the probity of one brother and the noble unselfishness of the other, and numberless friends were waiting to give them welcome.

Silently, however, and without notice, they landed at Liverpool and rode over the familiar road to Harkness. They did not enter it until they entered as masters, for the mortgage was easily lifted and all interest paid, except such as was to be paid in a life-long payment of grateful friendship and remembrances. They went home again when the old fields were yellow with corn and the garden bright with flowers and musical with birds and bees. They stood together again on the old hearthstone richer by many thousand pounds, richer by a

love tried to the extremity of shame and suffering, richer by a faith in each other that had survived its uttermost trial, richer by a hope in the Eternal which time could never shake.

As soon as the old farm had been repaired and re-furnished Harry wrote to Lucy Aiken a noble letter, touching in its self-abnegation, beautiful in its trust in the strength and character of her affection. The answer came one lovely Autumn evening when the brothers were once more leaning in the happy twilight over the garden wall. Over the dusky moor and up to the garden gate came Lucy's father, but this time he brought Harry's wife with him.

The joy of that meeting was worth the suffering that had gone before, and prefigured the prosperity and happiness that followed after. For when I knew Harry Harkness he was the foremost man of the foremost city of his country, honored and beloved both in the Halls of Commerce and the Tabernacle of Home.

And dear, noble Dick had his reward too. Harkness Homestead renewed its youth and glory, added broad acres to its domains, and long, comfortable wings to the Manor House.

In its sunny rooms "brown eyes" came and sat down by Dick's side, and if the want of children was any disappointment, it was amply redeemed by Harry's boys and girls, to every one of which Dick was as dear as a father.

They are old men, but their lives have been above many others "lovely and pleasant."

ROMANCE OF TWO PICTURES.

I do not think that all the romance of life lingers around Fifth Avenue and Madison Square. If I was a betting man, I would take the chances on one of the quiet streets laying above Fourth, and west of Broadway. I think, too, I ought to know; for, as a wealthy bachelor about town, I have boarded and occupied rooms in almost every respectable locality, and "I am free to maintain" that the most fashionable streets are, by long odds, the dreariest places in the city.

Last winter I had a suite of rooms about a block from Broadway, and in one of the lowest numbered streets I have indicated. They were comfortably and handsomely furnished, and there was not a woman in the house—not that I object to women, if they are young and pretty; but that is not the usual style of landladies. So I put it down among the advantages of these rooms that the housekeeper was an Italian, polite, suave and silent in four languages.

As my income is derived chiefly from well-rented property, and I have no literary tastes that the

daily newspapers do not satisfy, I often find myself with a good deal of spare time which I am willing to devote to other people's business or amusement. Luckily for me, a young Italian artist occupied rooms next to mine, and I soon fell into the habit of strolling into his studio, and passing the morning beside him. At this time he was copying in crayon two photographs that a celebrated house in town had sent him. The pictures were to be life-size, and finished by a certain day, as they were to go by the steamer leaving immediately after it to Scotland. They were the heads of two girls, sisters evidently; both blondes, and both so perfectly beautiful that it was impossible for us to decide to which the golden apple ought to be given.

I watched the progress of these pictures with a kind of fascination, and we speculated and conversed as to the charming originals.

"Not Scotch girls," Cellini said; "theirs was no pale, unripened northern beauty. The fire and passion of southern life was in the faces of both."

"Nonsense," I replied. "Every handsome woman is not necessarily Latin by race and tropical in nature. Yankee girls, both of them. I'll bet twenty years' experience on it."

As they drew near completion, I got uneasy; I could not bear to think of losing them entirely; so I said:

"Cellini, you must make me a copy of those two heads. I am fond of pictures, and I'll pay you twice what ——— does."

After some hesitation he agreed.

"You know," I urged, "that to me they will be only fancy pictures. I shall call them Venus and Hebe."

So, though the pictures went away, new ones were put upon the easel; and every morning I brought my Havanas into Cellini's studio, and watched the progress of my goddesses. In the course of time they adorned my own walls, and many a pleasant hour I spent admiring them and speculating about their history and home.

As for poor Cellini, it was easy to see that he had conceived for the eldest, whom I had called "Venus," a very real passion; but as "Hebe" was my favorite, we did not disagree on this subject. Somehow these two sweet faces, with their bright innocent beauty, began to exercise a strange influence over both of us. So real had they become to us, that we involuntarily uncovered our heads when we came into their presence; and as for talking in my usual free-and-easy manner before them, I felt it to be impossible. My sitting-room became a little sanctuary, and my usual wine parties were henceforward given in a hotel. I did not of course mention the reason to any of my companions but Cellini, and his romantic and imaginative nature saw nothing either sentimental or ridiculous in it.

And thus the summer passed away. Both Cellini and I went out of town, yet not so far but that we frequently ran into the city to take a look at our guardian angels. I think I will let "guardian angels" stand, for I am sure the lovely characteristic face of my "Hebe," with its childlike purity and

womanly decision, had wonderfully influenced me for good the last few months ; while Cellini's love was that of a devotee for a saint, rather than the worship of a man for an earthly mistress.

We had scarcely got settled comfortably in our winter quarters when I received intelligence of the death of an uncle in Edinburgh, and certain provisions of his will rendered a visit to Scotland indispensible. The hope—vague and undefined indeed, but still present—of learning something of the beautiful sisters, made a voyage across the Atlantic at this season more endurable than it would otherwise have been.

The night before I was to leave, Cellini and I spent together in my room. The two sweet faces looked down on us as we smoked and talked, and I quite shrunk from the pain of separation. Cellini gave me the original photographs from which he had at first copied, and these, and the information that the bill had been made out to a Mrs. Napier, was all the clue I had.

Although Scotland is my native country, I did not intend staying a day longer than was warrantable, for to me there is only one city to live in—New York ; it is, after all the fuss about the country, the best place in summer and the only place in winter. Still, I did not anticipate being back before Christmas ; so I asked Cellini to put a sprig of holly above the pictures, and promised, all well, to be back in time to make my New-year's calls.

The Italian was kindly and sensitive as a woman, and I don't think it any shame to say that he wept

on my shoulder that night, or that my own eyes, too, were wonderfully dim and misty. I could not help loving the fellow, utterly thriftless as he was, without an idea of the value of money, shamefully indifferent as to the fashion or quality of his coat, and particular about nothing on earth but the brand of his tobacco. Still I loved this man as I had never loved any man, or woman either, before. I made my agent collect his dues and pay such accounts as I knew were absolutely indispensible. I was proud of his genius, grateful for his love, and I trusted his simplicity and truthfulness with a confidence that kept my heart young and fresh. It was better than a sermon only to live by his side. Impurity of thought or speech was impossible in his presence; in his company, without one reproof or admonition, I had grown insensibly to hate my old life of dissipation and folly, and to become ambitious of something nobler and better. So you see I had good reasons for loving Cellini, and for sorrowing at our necessary separation.

After my arrival in Edinburgh I wrote out a list of all the "Napiers" in the directory, and then quietly made inquiries about them; but it was all futile, there was not a Miss Napier in the city that was not a libel on either of my pictures. I had made up my mind to return by the "Anchor Line," and for this purpose left Edinburgh for Glasgow about two weeks before Christmas, for I had friends in that city with whom I expected to stay a week before sailing for New York.

Two nights after my arrival I went with a small

party to Glover's theatre, and the first person my eye fell upon was "Hebe." But O how wonderfully changed! All the bright childish look of mirth and careless happiness was gone; washed out, it seemed to me, with tears, for her eyes had a tender, wistful look, as if they were searching for sympathy and love.

"Who is she, Sinclair?" I said, to the friend at my side.

"I do not know, for I seldom leave my books 'for woman's looks;' but McNair will tell you;" and turning to a gay young officer behind, said, "McNair, who is that young lady before us, in the second box from the stage?"

"Miss Lily Napier," he answered promptly. "Where have you been, Sinclair, not to know the beautiful barbarian?"

"Barbarian!" I repeated indignantly.

"Well, yes. I don't know why not. She comes from the Comanche country, and they say she is breaking her heart to get back to the Texas prairies again."

"Very creditable in her," I replied. "Anything is better than this smoky, dirty place. A girl like that wants sunshine and freedom!"

"Well, poor thing! she gets little enough of either now. The old lady is very hard upon her, sister Flora says. Seems to me no one could be cross to such a little beauty."

Of course I procured an introduction, and you may be sure I made the most of my time. I never worked as hard to please a girl before, and for the

very first time in my life I found myself honestly and desperately in love. I put off my voyage until I was ashamed to intrude any longer on my friends; besides, Cellini was urging my return by every post, in what I thought a very unreasonable manner. Before leaving Glasgow, however, I had so far gained her confidence as to be intrusted with a message to her mother and sister concerning her ill-treatment and her unhappiness. They were living at present in New York, and she gave me their address.

"You may have to go up two or three pairs of stairs, Mr. Lyell, for mamma is very poor. Do you think you can climb so high for me?"

I told her I "would go to the highest peak of the Alps to please her;" and she blushed, and said she "would not send me there, for fear I might not come down again."

"For fear I might not come down again." There was a shadow of hope in that, and you can't think how happy it made me.

I was to tell her mother to send for her immediately at all risks, and to pay no attention to any letters that might apparently come from her, for they were all dictated by her grandmother, and were generally the very antipodes of her true feelings.

"I have found out, Mr. Lyell, that poverty is not the worst of all evils. Tell mamma I want to come home, and that I would not give 'shucks,' as we say in Texas"—and she laughed merrily—"for all grandmamma's thousands."

You may be sure I promised all she required.

Holding her little hands, looking into her bright, pleading eyes, she might have asked, not the half, *but the whole* of my kingdom, and I would joyfully have laid it at her feet. I wanted to ask her to marry me, and let me carry her back home, but I was afraid. Can you understand me? I who had looked with suspicion on the smiles of the richest girls in New York—I who imagined I had nothing to do but choose and have—was actually afraid of this little penniless frontier girl, lest she should say "No" to me. Bidding her good-bye, I asked for permission to write.

"It would be to grandmamma. She would get the letter, of course."

So I was obliged to leave her without either promise or link of any kind between us. At our parting she gave me her mother's address. I was agreeably surprised to find it in the same street as my own rooms. All my anxiety was now to get back to New York. I thought continually of her suffering the most unnatural restraints, and pining for her home and friends, but I could do nothing for her release till I saw her mother.

Cellini was as happy as a child when we grasped each other's hands, and to tell the truth, I was as impatient as one could be to get into my room again and tell him my success. But before I got my travelling wraps off, he said joyfully:

"What do you think, Lyell? I have found 'Venus.'"

"And I 'Hebe.'"

"We are engaged."

"My dear Cellini, you have beat me. Who would have believed it?"

"Only in love. It is my nature. Forgive me."

I could hardly help hugging him.

"You beat me in everything that is good and noble, Cellini. If I had loved as purely and sincerely as you, she would have recognized it, and I should have felt no doubts and fears. I might have been happy to-day."

"You will be happy. See! she smiles on you."

I almost fancied she did. Then I told him all that had happened, and declared my intention of going to see Mrs. Napier that very night.

"It is well," he said. "I shall go in half an hour. I will introduce you."

He had always been good-tempered, but there was a repose and peace about him now that was almost grand.

"What *is* the matter with you, Cellini?" I said.

"I am satisfied. Life is complete. Claudia has perfected the circle of existence."

"Claudia is—?"

"My Venus. I found her soon after you left. I went to see Paola one morning, and he was giving her a music lesson. He introduced me. I went for my lesson every day she went for hers, until I obtained permission, one stormy afternoon, to take her home. She invited me to call, and lo! I am happy. We shall be married when I have saved money enough."

I laughed heartily.

"Do not laugh, Lyell. See!" and he took his pocket-book triumphantly out of his desk.

There really was quite a large sum in hiding there.

"I am growing industrious, you see, and," screwing up his face comically, "awful stingy."

I do not know what I had expected to find in Mrs. Napier, but I know that I was agreeably surprised. She was a very handsome woman of thirty-eight years of age, and every way satisfied all my demands for a mother-in-law. I found that her pen was her chief support, and that under her *nom de plume* she had long been a favorite writer of mine.

I do not think I ever spent happier evenings than I did at her house. There was always one or two nice people there, and I began to imagine myself quite literary by association, and to buy more books than ever I had done in my life.

Lily's return was of course the one idea, and the chief topic of all my conversation and hopes, but it was delayed until weeks lengthened into months and spring was fairly regnant. I knew it by the fresh bright toilets on Broadway, and my tailor's suggestions as to my own dress. But there had been great difficulty in inducing the old lady in Glasgow to resign Lily, and it was not thought wise to irritate her by a forcible or peremptory removal.

But just as summer was coming, and the town was beginning to thin, and there were nice prospects of long quiet evenings with the Napiers, and of moonlight rides in the Park, Lily came home. I went down to pier No. 20 with her mother and sister and

Cellini to meet her, and I noticed how the captain and officers gathered round her, and how loth they were to part with her, and how she gave a parting word or smile to every sailor she passed on the steamer. Every one seemed to feel a little shadow at her departure. But I was in luck now; it was my turn to be in the sunshine, and I was determined to make it my right as soon as possible.

All summer I stayed in town because the Napiers did; and I must say I have the highest opinion of New York as a summer resort. I could get just as much fruit and ice as I wanted; I could have company when I desired it, and peace when I wished to be alone; and as for the heat, it is my opinion that New York is ten degrees cooler than any of the fashionable watering-places.

During the summer Lily and I came to understand one another; and at its close Cellini and Claudia were married, and went to Italy for a couple of years. You see I was furnishing my house, and I needed so many more pictures than I had, that Cellini was able to realize quite a large sum of money. He had contracted a very good habit of working and saving, and Claudia was as practical and sensible as she was beautiful, and bid fair to keep him up to his new position, and to supply the commercial element which was lacking in her husband.

I hear a great deal about unhappy marriages, and the failure of the institution altogether to supply what it has done for ages, the highest form of peace and love to be found on earth, but I do not believe a word of it.

It is true, I am much changed since I married, but I think it is for the best, no matter what my old companions say.

I attend better to my business ; I have raised all my rents and improved my property. I do not give any more wine parties, and I never go to a theatre unless the play is quite proper, and I can have Lily by my side.

My public parlors are full of fine pictures, but you won't see *the two crayon heads* among them. They adorn the walls of our private sitting-room, into which no stranger ever comes ; for it seems to me out of all good taste to hang the faces of those you love where every indifferent person may look upon and criticise them.

As I write this, the bright innocent face I have loved from my first glimpse of it, looks down on me, and I know the sunshine of its smile brightens all the house and all my life ; and as I hear the time-piece on the mantel chiming six o'clock, I know that very soon two light feet will trip down stairs, and two white arms will clasp my neck, and the dear face of my "Hebe" will nestle close to mine, and whisper, "Don't you know dinner is waiting for you, lazy darling?" And though that is a very prosaic ending to my story, it is one that stands a good many trials, and is, after all, a very solid and enjoyable close to a contented, happy day.

THE STORY OF A WEDDING.

One of the prettiest places in Cumberland is the little village of Undercliff. Surrounded by lofty hills, and off the great roads of travel, it has preserved, even unto this day, a great number of picturesque provincial customs.

A few years ago, in a journey from Keswick to Carlisle, I had occasion to pass through it at an hour so early, that I should have thought it unlikely many of the inhabitants would be awake. But before we entered the place, an unusually merry peal from the church bells attracted our attention, and no sooner had we come within sight of the quaint, reddish-looking houses, that we were sensible of some very unusual commotion.

The windows and doors of nearly every home were open, and there was a festival look about the groups talking at the street-corners, or leaning, laughing over the half-doors so common in that locality. A great number of young girls dressed in white were passing down the streets, and some men

were carrying large baskets of cut flowers towards the old church which stood in the very centre of the village. We determined to stay for breakfast at the bright little inn, and accept our share of sympathetic pleasure with whatever was in progress.

When the landlady came to receive us I noticed that her lace cap and Sunday gown were elaborately trimmed with white satin ribbons, and this circumstance helped me to my first question.

"You have some wedding, surely, to-day, in the village?"

"Indeed we have, ma'am; and a good wedding may it be! And God's blessing on what the wicked would have hindered, but for Him!"

Evidently, there was some unusual interest attached to this marriage; but every one was so full of expectation and excitement that there seemed to be no hope of learning what it was until after the ceremony. This, however, is not usually delayed in the North of England beyond nine o'clock; and even before that hour the bells clashed out in jubilant melody; there was the rattle of approaching carriages, the bridal procession passed triumphantly up the street, and I caught a glimpse of a lovely women in a mist of white lace and white flowers. At the great iron gates of the churchyard she was met by a procession of young girls, dressed in white, and singing. Certainly, the joyful, moving picture was not one to be easily forgotten.

But we were then much hurried for time, and beyond the fact that the bride's name was Alice Hatton, the only child of Thomas Hatton, of Hatton

Hall, and high sheriff of the county, I could learn nothing. In three months, however, we should pass through Undercliff again, and I planned for at least a couple of days' stay in the romantic old village. There were lead mines and wonderful spars in the vicinity which would tempt the good doctor, who was our chief authority, and I promised myself a long gossip with the handsome, talkative hostess about the wedding and the bride.

As it happened, I had no occasion for my planning, for one evening as we left our hotel in Edinburgh, for a walk on the castle ramparts, the beautiful bride of Undercliff entered it. She was leaning upon her husband's arm, and my first impression of the couple was, that they were both eminently handsome and attractive looking. During the next week we were constantly meeting ; and at last advanced so far in our acquaintanceship as to join each other when we met in the grim old rooms of Holyrood, or among the memories of the Old Town or Grass-market.

One day we met, by a kind of implied appointment, at Roslyn Castle. Alice looked pale and weary, and complained of headache ; so the gentlemen went together on some of those many ways which they can always find to walk in, and Alice and I sat down upon an old Abbot's grave-stone and began to talk.

Of course the opening wedge to confidence was dress, then we passed to our husbands, and probably both of us said better of them than they deserved. Then I told Alice that I had seen her on her mar-

riage morning, and repeated to her in an interrogative manner the words of our pleasant landlady: "A good wedding may it be. And God's blessing on what the wicked would have hindered, but for Him."

"What made you remember those words?" she said, smiling.

"I thought they indexed a story."

"Would you like to hear it?"

"Very much."

"Then you must have a little patience with me, for the story begins before I was born."

"We have plenty of time, the doctor is hunting ferns; he will not come back until he is weary."

"Well, then, about twenty years ago, a certain Captain Walter Hart, of her majesty's calvary, came to Undercliff with his wife and son, and took rooms for a month at the inn there. The captain had a month's furlough, and the trout becks and moors were the great attraction. My husband—then a lad of seven years old—was their only child; he was an utter pet, and accompanied his father in many of his expeditions among the hills.

"The country people frequently warned them to beware of the mosses, but no danger was apprehended until one night they failed to return. The next day they were still missing; great numbers of people went out to seek them, but at the close of the second day they were still missing, and the general opinion was, they had got into some treacherous bog and been swallowed up. My father was nearly the only man who had any faith left in their recovery,

and his faith was rewarded ; early on the fourth day he came upon them in a state of utter exhaustion. Captain Hart had broken his ankle, and the child was in an almost delirious condition. They were taken at once to the Hall, and father and Mrs. Hart nursed both back to life again.

" After this Walter Hart and Thomas Hatton were friends closer than brothers ; and this friendship was drawn still closer the following Christmas, for then father met Alice Hart, my mother, and fell in love with her. Their 'course of true love' ran smooth enough ; it was a suitable match on both sides, and the next summer the marriage took place in Undercliff; for the Hattons have been married in the old church of Undercliff for six hundred years, and there seemed no reason to break so long and pleasant a custom.

" Unfortunately, soon after my birth, my mother died ; and father had scarcely recovered from the shock of his great loss, when Captain Hart was ordered to the East Indies. His friends urged him to sell out, but this he would not do, neither would Mrs. Hart consent to be separated from her husband. All, however, agreed that the boy Walter must be left ; he was old enough to go to school and it would be fatal every way to take him to Calcutta. This parting was a great sorrow to father ; and in the very first year of their Indian life both Captain Hart and his wife died from fever. Then father took Walter from school, and henceforward Hatton Hall was his home.

" So you see, Walter and I grew up together.

True, he was nine years older than I, but I think that was a favorable circumstance. I was a little creature to be loved and cared for, and protected; and he carried this idea of me so firmly in his heart, that when he came from Oxford at the end of his last term, and found me a young lady, he was quite amazed.

"He liked it, though, and during that sweet summer vacation we learnt the dear old story together. Father was delighted; Walter had always been very dear ever since the hour he had found him dying, and nursed the patient, grateful little fellow back to life again. It seemed really as if no possible trouble could come to darken our affection. True, Walter would have to leave me in the autumn, for he had entered into partnership with a large firm engaged in the Turkish trade; and it was a stipulation that he should go to Constantinople for a year or two and obtain on the spot a practical knowledge of the business. But I was only seventeen; we might well defer our marriage a year or more, and when one is happy, a year does not look a long time.

"Father approved the whole arrangement. If Walter could not be a landed gentleman, then the next best thing, he thought, was to be a great merchant. It was by my father's advice Walter had invested his little fortune in the Turkish trade, and he thoroughly believed in men knowing all about their business. So one morning Walter bid us a hopeful 'good-by,' and went to look after his fortune. He was to go to London first, and immediately from there to Constantinople. He promised to write to

me from London, and then I anticipated having to wait for any further news, until he arrived at his destination.

"How often I counted the days that must elapse before I could have a letter. I was sure Walter would write the moment he arrived in London and I counted first for that. I was disappointed. Then I made allowance for him missing a post. No letter. Then I supposed business, sickness, everything but that it was possible he could forget me. When I had been disappointed for a week, even father began to be anxious and angry. He wrote to the firm in London, and immediately received a reply, stating that Walter Hart was in perfect health, and had left for Turkey several days previously.

"Suddenly it struck father that Walter must have written, but that perhaps he had given the letter to some careless person, who had either lost or forgotten it, and that we should surely hear from him as soon as possible after his arrival in Constantinople. This supposition seemed so natural, that we both expected it without a doubt; father went happily about his usual employments, and I amused myself by counting the days that must elapse before the first letter could arrive. Father said I counted too close, and so he counted also, leaving what he called a margin for delays and accidents. Yet I could see that he had really expected a letter by the same post as I did, and that, when none came, he shared fully in my miserable disappointment.

"Day after day passed—O, so wearily! I lived

but for one hour. When it had come, and gone, and brought me nothing, I gave up all the rest to despondency and despair. No one can imagine what two wretched people wandered about the beautiful rooms and gardens of Hatton Hall. I do believe that father suffered as much as I did, for Walter had been for years dear as his own son to him, and indeed, when a girl, I had often been very jealous of his affection for this strange boy.

"Days grew into weeks, and nothing came to lift this singular and unnatural silence. My father wrote again to the London firm, and also to Walter at Constantinople. The letter to the firm was promptly answered:

"'Mr. Hart was doing excellently; the house was particularly obliged to Squire Hatton for his influence in securing to it such an efficient aid.'

"But his letter to Walter brought back no response. Then his wronged affection turned into bitterest anger; he hunted up all Walter's college scrapes and founded on them the very worst suspicions; he convinced me, as well as himself, that there had been some previous entanglement from which he either could not or would not free himself.

"It was a very dreary winter. I went little out, for I was very sensitive to the universal public sentiment and sympathy. Our engagement had been known to the whole village, my desertion was equally known, and every one felt they had a right to offer me sympathy either in words or looks. But no sorrow lives forever. When spring returned we had arrived at some kind of resignation about

our wrong; and my father's anger had changed into contempt—'he was sorry for the poor coward; without a word to say for himself, he had simply sneaked out of his obligations; but for his poor father's sake he would not be the one to injure his fair name.' I think at this time he really dreaded every day that Walter would play his partners equally false, and run away with their money.

"During the summer we had a great deal of company, and I had the part of hostess to play; so that I was compelled in a manner to carry a cheerful face and manner among my guests. And we can assume a sentiment until in some measure we feel it; so that in the main the sweet, warm months went pleasantly by. With the autumn a great calamity fell upon our immediate dependents. The tenants and laborers of the manor live mostly together in a little hollow below the Hall. I had often pointed out its unhealthy location, but the Hatton laborers had always lived in those cottages, and ours thought it was one of their inalienable privileges to do the same.

"But in spite of their confidence and satisfaction, an unusually wet fall was accompanied by a fever of a very fatal character. It began in our cottages, but soon spread rapidly through the village. Death was in nearly every house, and the help and sympathy of the Hall was almost hourly demanded. This threw a gloom over the dying year which did not fail to impress us painfully, and it was also impossible to forget that at this time last November Walter had gone away with such bright promises

both for himself and us. One day, in some softer mood, my father was thinking of him.

"'Alice,' he said, 'the captain was a noble, honorable gentleman; his mother was a good woman, if one ever lived; he himself was a straightforward, loving little lad, all the years he grew up beside me—I don't understand it—there *must* be some explanation.'

"Just as he finished speaking, a servant came to tell me that Dame Holloway was dying and wanted to see me. I frowned at the request. Of all the women in our village I disliked her most. She kept the post-office, and when my trouble was fresh and bitter, irritated me beyond endurance by her obtrusive interest in my correspondence. But I excused her impertinence because the year previously my father had dismissed her daughter from the Hall for some offence, in a very prompt and summary way. It had been raining too, and looked stormy. 'I cannot go to-night, Parker,' I said.

"In about half an hour Parker came again.

"'Miss Alice,' he said, 'the dame be dreadful bad, and she can't die till you come.'

"'I will go with you, Alice,' said father; so I had no alternative but to obey the request. I went crossly enough; but she was past all anger when I reached her. It would have been inhuman not to have felt pity for a creature so near the grave. She looked eagerly at us as we advanced towards her bedside.

"'Squire,' she said, in a whisper that was but a

thread of her old rasping voice—'Squire and Miss Alice, I have done you both a mighty wrong.'

"The squire did not speak; I looked anxiously in the fast settling face and said:

"'Oh, Dame! Dame, tell us all!'

"'Three days after Master Walter went away, a parcel came to you from London. It had something heavy in it—I were curious to see what—I began to open it, and I could not stop. It were a little box with a rare gold chain and locket. I kept it a day to think what I must do with it—then I kept it another day, and then my Lucy came from Gatesfell to see me and I showed it to her—she took it back with her. Then I knew not what else to do but keep all the other letters. Master Walter was gone to foreign parts—I hoped he ne'er come back again. I kept Squire's letters to him, and all the letters that came over sea to squire. They are in that box there.'

"Still the squire spoke not, but I was sobbing bitterly, I hardly knew whether for joy or grief.

"'And that very locket! it's brought my Lucy sorrow in plenty. Her missis thought she stole money, and they searched her trunk and found it, 'mong other things, and Lucy would say nought to blame me, so they sent her to the House of Correction, and the girl has e'en gone on from bad to worse —Oh, God! they who gang a wrong road gang a sorrowful one!'

"It was very pitiful to see the poor, gasping, terrified woman. After a moment's pause, she said:

"'Squire! squire! what be you going to do to me?'

"Then my father stooped, so that she could hear him distinctly, and said:

"'Dame, I'll do this: I'll go and bring your Lucy back to Undercliff—back to the Hall; and I'll give her every chance to be a good girl again. I was perhaps too hard with her before, I'll be very patient with her now. Do you hear me, Dame?'"

"What did she say to that?" I asked, eagerly, for the squire's behavior touched me greatly.

"She clasped her hands and said: 'I'm no longer feared to die—if man can be so merciful, I'll e'en trust the mercy of the Almighty.'"

We were both quiet a few moments, then I said:

"Well, you wrote to Walter, of course?"

"No. The squire started next morning for Constantinople, and when he came back, Walter came with him."

"No wonder every one rejoiced with you."

"Every one had sorrowed in my disappointment. No one was indifferent to Dame Holloway's confession and its results, and I think nearly every one accepted with my father the charge he had assumed with regard to the repentent woman's daughter. She met with much genuine kindness and forbearance from her old companions."

"And she profited by it?"

"Have you noticed that pretty, merry girl that trots after me all the time when I am in the hotel?"

"Yes."

"That is Lucy."

A Discovered Life.

Welcome ever both to gods and men are the persevering and the self-helpful ; and Elkanah Ramsden, standing one spring morning in his wonderful factory, was not inclined to underrate either his own merits or the reward they had brought him. For the Ramsden factory was a wonderful place; indeed, Elkanah rather considered it as the veritable final cause of iron and cotton. For to feed its craving machines, the Hindoo ryot, the Malabar coolie, the abject Egyptian, the American negro were all at work ; and from the four quarters of the world had come the fibres that were twisting and twirling round the metal rods, and darting in between the finely-polished meshes.

The dusty daylight was loaded with a thousand subtle odors of oil and cotton and dyes ; but the sunshine fell on hundreds of webs, many-colored, bright-tinted, soft and glossy as silk, beautiful with all manner of devices and reliefs and borders. It fell also on hundreds of "hands," some ordinary enough,

slipshod both as to mind and body ; and others just as evidently set apart by extraordinary qualities either acquired or natural. Among the best workers were many women, mostly round, rosy-faced Yorkshire girls, though here and there was a distinctive Lancashire countenance, lit with the bewitching gray eyes, long fringed, and full of intelligence.

Beside such a girl Elkanah stopped and said, half-angrily and half-pityingly, "David's loom is empty again, lass."

"It's dree work, master, bide wi him a bit?"

"Then it's for thy sake, Mary."

She said nothing, but dropped her eyes on her work, and the master walked thoughtfully away.

All the morning the loom stood empty, and Mary watched it with anxious eyes ; but when the great iron-gates opened to admit the afternoon workers a young man glided up to her side, and said, penitently :

"Mary, lass, thou's none angered at me. I were belated last night, for I walked so far I couldna win back, and so belike, I lost my half day again."

She turned reproachfully, but the anger all vanished before the sunny face and merry eyes of her companion.

"I'm a foolish woman, David," she answered ; "and I'm feared I'll ne'er be a wiser one."

But her folly seemed, at least, to make her happier ; the fair, oval face held, all afternoon, a rosy color, and the great, gray eyes glanced sweet intelligences from her own work to the loom which seemed now to be doing double duty.

Mary's companions called her a prosperous woman. She was a favorite with both her master and the overseer ; she was a clever worker, earned thirty shillings a week, and saved half of it, and the handsomest lad in the Ramsden Mills was her lover. But there is a prosperity and adversity not witnessed by the world, and whose theatre is the heart, and Mary knew that there were elements of probable disaster gathering round her life which would work her sore trouble unless she could summon strength to control them.

She had allowed herself to be drifted along by circumstances, but she knew that this aimless progress must soon resolve itself into a question of "this road" or "that road." She did not distrust her own judgment, and was a woman very likely, amid many counsellors, to follow it : but yet, with a very natural feeling, she wanted some one to advise her to do what she had already determined to do. So one evening when David, according to custom, came to ask her to "go for a bit walk," she answered, decidedly, "I'm going by myself to-night, lad." He did not ask her "where ;" his character was too easy and facile for that. He had full confidence in his own influence over her, and if she was not going with him, why, he must find another companion ; and meeting Jack Harkness at the street corner, he readily fell into his proposition "to tak a glass o' beer."

In the meantime Mary, dressed with great care and neatness, walked rapidly to a much more respectable part of the city, and stopping before a neat,

brick house, knocked gently. The door was quickly opened by a delicate little lady, with the kindliest face set in a spotless border of fine cambric.

"Mary," she said, "I saw thee coming, dear. Walk in."

"Is't parson in?"

"Surely. There is nothing wrong, I hope."

"I hope not, ma'am. I want him to tell me, that is all."

"Well, go straight to his study; there is no one there."

The study door was open, and Parson Bradley saw Mary as she came up stairs.

"Good-evening, dear," he said, as she advanced; "you were not at your class-meeting for two weeks. I was going to send one of the leaders to look after you."

"No need, sir—I hae been sorely troubled in my mind, and with troubles maybe a lass wouldna care to speak of in her class-meeting; so I've e'en come to your study, sir."

"Good girl, you're welcome; now tell me the whole truth. I can't advise on half lights, Mary."

"It's about David, sir. You know I like the lad; hoo well I like him nobody knows but myseln. Yet I'm feared to say the word that binds me to him."

"What for?"

"He's gotten no backbone, sir, no purpose; he just needs to be bolstered up a' the time. He means to do well, but everybody says 'go' and 'come' to him, and he's gotten no mind of his own."

"The more, Mary, he needs a wife whose charac-

ter is like yours—built upon a rock. Whenever a duty comes in our way there is no getting round about it innocently—that is my opinion."

"But am I David's keeper when I'm no married to him?"

"If you love him, and he loves you—if you can keep him from doing wrong, and help him to do right, why then, I think you are."

"Thank you, sir:—there is something else—the Master, Mr. Ramsden, you know him, sir?"

"Yes, what of him?"

"He likes me well, too, sir, and has spoken kindly words to me, and I'm feared he'll be hard on David."

"Do you mean to say that Mr. Ramsden has asked you to be his wife?"

"Surely, sir. I'm a decent lass—he would not have sought my favor otherwise."

"You'd be a rich woman, Mary, and could do a deal of good:—but you don't love him, eh?"

"That is where the shoe pinches, sir—I don't love him."

"Then if you are the good girl I take you to be, you'll just marry David, and do your very best for the lad."

"Thank you, sir, I will."

With her minister's advice to strengthen her own desires, Mary ventured to risk her happiness in David's keeping. But the trouble she had feared soon gathered. David gave her almost from the first constant anxiety; he detested his loom, and soon contrived to get dismissed; and yet it was not

from any idleness of disposition ; he was wonderfully energetic at anything that could be done in the open air ; he would walk scores of miles on pretense of seeking work, and come back from his tramp with pockets full of bugs, stones, and curious things, and his heart as full of content as if he was earning his living.

Unfortunately, in these tramps he met with other men of the same nomadic habits, and far less innocent tastes ; disreputable-looking characters lounged about the street corner waiting for him, and David ere long began to come home drunk. No one in this gradual falling away could blame Mary ; she kept their one room clean and comfortable ; she worked steadily ; she had twice found him work ! she had constantly and patiently encouraged his spasmodic reformations ; she had hoped against hope, until even David, when sober, was ashamed to look her in the face.

As long as it was only David and herself, the pinch of poverty, that came soon enough, did not so very much fret her, though her plump, oval cheeks looked wan and thin, and the wonderful gray eyes had a pathetic anxiety in them. Elkanah Ramsden was the first to notice it, and he tried, as far as Mary would let him, to be a friend ; she owed to his forbearance the bread of many a week, for with the birth of children, even Mary's steady loom was deserted at intervals, and her heart and her hands were sadly divided. Yet with that God-like sympathy, common to all true women, Mary loved her husband and children continually the better as they

seemed less worthy of it. She had loved David when he stood before her in all the winsome beauty and hopefulness of his best years, but not as she loved him now, fallen from himself, and despised among his fellows ; and as for her poor, sickly children, she loved them all the more passionately because their pinched, famine-stricken lives had been defrauded of all pleasant things.

One night, coming home through the rain, cold, and hungry, and utterly miserable—for she had not seen David for two days—she met her old master. In her pre-occupied sorrow she would have passed him, but a true love is born for adversity. "Mary," he said, and said it so kindly, and with such sincere sympathy, that she burst into tears.

"Oh, sir, I'm in sair sorrow !"

"May I help you ? Just, Mary, as I would help any other sorrowful woman."

"The children are most famished, and oh ! the fearful cold ! And we have had no food or coals for nigh on to two days, sir !" and here she broke into passionate sobbing.

"Poor lass ! poor lass ! go your ways home, I'll see you have fire and food enough in half an hour. Where's David ?"

"Oh ! master, that's worse than all—I havna' seen the lad since Monday."

"Well, perhaps he'll be home when you get there. Run away to the bairns, my lass."

She thanked him with a look, and hastened home, but David was not there. Even the unwonted comfort of a blazing fire, and the unwonted delight of

seeing her children eat just as much as they wanted, could not soothe her distress. David had stayed away before, but never had such a presentiment of trouble haunted her.

As she walked about her room hushing her baby, a neighbor looked in with a troubled face. She had a newspaper in her hand, and she glanced first at Mary, and then at it. Mary stopped suddenly, and looked wistfully at her.

> "There was a listening fear in her regard,
> As if calamity had but begun."

"O, woman! woman! Whaten's the matter? Where's my lad?"

"I'm feared he's in prison, Mary." Mary did not scream nor faint; her blood rushed to her face, and then back in a choking tide to her heart. Her husband in prison! had it come to this? She laid the baby in her neighbor's arms:

"Let me see the paper, woman; I want to read it myseln."

There it was: "Three men of suspicious character, David Yorke, Jack Dickson and Jerry Wilson, were arrested last night on charge of robbing Mr. Josiah Holderness while walking in his own park. Some of the money in their possession has been identified as drawn by Mr. Holderness that day from the Spinners' Bank." She read no further; she remembered that David had been discharged only ten days ago from the Holderness Mills, and that he had spoken at the time very bitterly about

the author of what he called his "ill-luck." But there was worsè in store.

"You'll see, Mr. Holderness is badly hurt, Mary," said the neighbor, with a tone of tears in her voice.

With a dreadful terror tightening on her heart, Mary read that the unfortunate gentleman had been felled by a blow from one of his assailants, and had been insensible ever since. It was doubtful yet whether the three culprits would have to be tried for theft or for murder. She threw a shawl over her head, and unheeding all remonstrance, fled through the rain and wind and darkness, like some hunted creature. Ere long she stopped at the good minister's door; his wife heard the sobbing voice, and before she had finished her request, came forward with outstretched hands, "Poor lass! poor lass!" she said tenderly, "come in."

"Oh, mistress, where ist' parson?"

"He'll be here directly, Mary. · Can I do nothing for you?"

"No, nothing. My grief is ayont comforting words."

The good woman took no offence; a great grief is a great consecration. A great silence fell on the two women.

Suddenly Parson Bradley opened the door; he smiled gently, when Mary turned her wretched face toward him, and said:

"Don't be miserable above measure, Mary. I have seen David—I am just come from him."

Then she sat down, threw her apron over her

head, and rocking herself backwards and forwards, began to cry bitterly.

"Hush, my woman! Maybe things are better than they look. I don't believe David has done this thing."

Then she suffered herself to be persuaded to eat a bowl of boiled bread and milk, and talk rationally over the calamity that had befallen her.

"David says he met Jack Dickson and Jerry Wilson at the little public-house where they were all arrested only yesterday afternoon—the attack was on the evening before—he insists that none of the money was found on him, that indeed he had not a farthing in his possession even of his own—and I believe him—David is a very weak lad, but not a wicked one."

"You bid me marry him, Parson."

"I am not sorry I did so, Mary."

"Oh, sir! If you had felt the hunger and cold and the sorrow of aye watching and fearing for him."

"Love often demands great sacrifices, Mary. How else should we understand the Divine Love, that never, never wearies? If David has fallen so low with you, dare you guess where he would have been without you? I am not downhearted, not a bit; it is the turning-point, lass; when the tide is clear out it begins to flow back again. Go away home to the children; I shall see that David does not go to the wall for want of friends and good counsel."

And he kept his word. Fully pursuaded in his own mind of the man's innocence, his convictions

inspired others with the same belief. Mr. Ramsden was induced to pay a good lawyer to defend him, and others for whom he had worked promised to say in his behalf whatever they conscientiously could. But the trial was long delayed, Mr. Holderness recovered very slowly, and it was early summer before the case came up for examination. The confinement had at first sorely chafed David; he longed with all the passion of a restless, nomadic temperament for freedom, and when resignation came, remorse and repentance came also in all their hardest, blankest form. For he was cut off from all his usual stimulants, and there was no fond wife nigh to excuse him, and put him on good terms with himself again.

The trial came on at last. David's lawyer had prepared a most convincing defence, and four of his old employers were present to speak for him.

But their good word was not needed after all, for as soon as Mr. Holderness was brought into court to be sworn against the three men, he at once declared there was a mistake. He positively asserted that only two men had attacked him; that he had observed those two attentively as they came towards him, and without any hesitation selected the two guilty men—neither of them was David. Furthermore, he voluntarily affirmed that though David was an idle, graceless fellow, he believed him incapable of taking any man's purse, much less of attacking his life.

Such testimony was conclusive, and David left the court-room a free man. But crime and punish-

ment grow out of the same stem. Now that David longed to work, no one would give it to him ; his friends did not care to know him ; all his old workfellows passed him by. He stood in greater danger than before, and Mary saw that she must make yet another effort for his welfare.

This time she went to her old master ; she showed him just how David stood with his little world, and begged him to send the lad away where he could have a fair chance to put his good resolutions in practice. Mr. Ramsden had but little hope, but he was not able to resist Mary's pleading face, and so, within a week, David, full of new-born hopes, was on his way to New York. He made plenty of brave promises, and Mary believed in them ; for once, too, he believed in them himself, although he had no definite plan as to how they were to be redeemed.

But when nearing the American coast, the key to his character was found. A terrific storm came on ; for eight days they were fighting Death hand to hand, and when all hopes seemed over, and most of the crew absolutely refused to obey orders longer, David was the captain's right hand. Things that seemed impossible to landsmen, he did by some natural gift or instinct ; his spirits rose with the storm, rose above it ; and the man who had always been a coward among wheels and bands and pulleys, knew only a fierce, exulting joy in his strife with winds and waves. When at the last extremity, they met a steamer who took them into port ; but the first step on the right road for David had been taken. Before

they parted, the captain spoke out frankly his admiration and thanks, and said bluntly :

" What's your trade, young man?"

" A spinner and weaver, sir."

" And your father's?"

" The same, Captain."

" Very strange. Well, your father made you a weaver, and nature made you a sailor ; but that's the way, people steer on wrong tacks, and then wonder they run on rocks."

That conversation took place ten years ago. Its results may be guessed in this fact, that there is not to-day a safer, bolder, and more trusted Captain in all the merchant service than Captain David Yorke. He is a saved man ; in discovering his proper vocation, he discovered his life. Into this work he put his whole heart ; he never wanted to be idle—never wanted to shirk duty, for work was pleasure, and duty a delight.

Mary has seen many good days ; her faith in her husband's better nature, her honest acceptance of the destiny pointed out by her true woman's heart, met, as it usually does, its full reward ; for Love trusts where it cannot see, and bespeaks prosperity even by that trust.

THE TRUE DELZEL.

They write the name Delzel now, but it was originally Dalzel, a branch of the Scotch Dalzels, of Forfarshire; a family who felt dishonor like a wound, and boasted that no meaner strain than their own had ever weakened the old Dalzel attributes. Early in colonial days a younger son had emigrated to the southern settlements, and being naturally prudent, as well as brave, had amassed great wealth and a vast estate.

True, it had often been weakened by the subdivisions incidental to families; but in 1825, Alexander Dalzel, the sole representative of the main line, was a wealthy and important man, of whom great things were hoped, now that he had abandoned his roving habits, married a beautiful wife, and entered the arena of politics and jurisprudence.

The necessity for this course had come upon him suddenly after a week of rain and *ennui* in London. He was near forty years of age, weary of every form of familiar enjoyment, and matrimony seemed

to promise, at least, a change. Besides, he really had a large remnant of family pride—he did not care to be the last of his race—he would marry and have sons. He returned home, and meeting Lola Sheldon, a pretty New Orleans belle in her eighteenth year, he married her. Lola was winning and obedient; he grew every day more and more enamored of his young wife, and he was almost broken-hearted when, after a year of unbroken happiness, she gave birth to a daughter and died.

It was almost with a feeling of resentment he heard of the child; he had no desire to see it. If it had been a son, there might, indeed, have been some consolation in the idea. But the little girl was not welcome at the price he had had to pay for her, and she was placed with small ceremony in the charge of Effie MacRae, the young wife of the head gardener, who also had just become the mother of a little girl.

Effie was to bring up the child with her own until the unwilling father sent her further instructions. Then the Delzel house was closed, the servants hired out hither and thither, and John MacRae, his wife and the two infants, alone remained in charge of the pleasant house and gardens. There was but a few days difference in the children's ages, and there were also many points of resemblance in their appearances. Before they could walk these facts had begun to sow strange thoughts in Effie's mind. For Effie was a proud woman—"ane o' the Campbells," as she continually told both herself and her husband—and the imperious, willful baby, which was

so like herself, grew gradually in her eyes to be the most suitable heiress of Delzel mansion and lands.

Weak as her husband was, he did not submit to the imposition without stormy protests, but he both feared and idolized his wife, and had not the moral courage to oppose her first small beginnings of wrong. Before the children were two years old, Effie's own child was known to all around as Adrienne Delzel, while the real Adrienne bore the simple name of Jessie MacRae.

In the children's fifth year a circumstance happened which still further bound Effie to the part she had taken. The father of Adrienne suddenly returned, and coming unexpectedly in search of his child, found the two little girls in the midst of a quarrel. He watched them keenly, and seeing Effie's child, with flashing eyes and commanding manner, completely humble her companion, he instantly decided that the queenly, black-eyed vixen was his own daughter. He called her to him, and learning that her name was Adrienne Delzel, he threw a gold chain and locket about her neck, and told her that he was her father.

The child had been well prepared for this event. From her infancy Effie had privately told her wonderful stories of a splendid papa who would come to see her some day ; and the child was quite ready to welcome him. Many other little things conspired, after this, to bind the deception irrevocably.

Ten years passed away, and Effie's sin had not yet found her out. "God does not pay every Saturday ;" but now, for the first time, she began

to perceive that she would not be always able to control events. Mr. Delzel came down to Delzel with Adrienne's aunt, and Effie was required to give up her child to this lady's keeping. She cried and implored, but without effect; it had been decided that it was time the young heiress should go to a fashionable school, and have fine masters and fine clothes.

The pain of the separation was heightened, too, by the child's manifest delight at the change. Effie loved her daughter passionately, and it was worse than death to give her up to utter strangers, who were to train her for a life which would eventually separate them still further. All she could obtain, however, was a promise of a letter once every three months, and an invitation to visit Adrienne at her aunt's house once a year.

In the children's sixteenth years two new complications arose. Jessie was wooed, and her affections won, by a young backwoodsman and hunter called Andrew Latta. Effie had tacitly encouraged this love affair, but John, for once, defied his wife, and positively forbid the young people to see each other again.

In the midst of this dispute Mr. Delzel suddenly returned to the house, bringing with him workmen and artificers of all kinds, and a large retinue of servants. Miss Delzel had finished her education, and made a brilliant début, receiving almost at her entrance into society the offer of an alliance whose wealth and position had filled her father and friends with pride and gratification. The Delzel home was

to be adorned for her bridal, and for a few months of wooing and preparation she was to queen it over her father's house and the whole country-side.

It was a lovely day in the early summer when Adrienne came home again. But the day had grown warm in its advance, and the beauty was tired and cross. Effie, full of an unnatural exaltation which no one understood, was necessarily disappointed. Her very effusiveness was wearisome to the proud, tired girl, who, barely civil at first, became speedily bored and indifferent. Poor Effie! she came home from that first interview with a tide of mortified love and anger swelling in her heart.

But she soon made plenty of excuses for her idol, and as the day cooled, went back to offer her services as maid. Adrienne was good-humored now, but full of that insolence of youth and beauty which is so overbearing when allied to wealth.

"You good creature," she said, "whoever heard of such a thing? What a fright you would make me! I have Fanchette here, who knows all the new modes, and can dress hair to a marvel;" and Fanchette smiled and bowed to her mistress, and looked at Effie with an incredible disdain.

Evidently nothing was to be granted Effie on account of the past, nor was Adrienne really to blame for her view of the case. She had only a vague memory of her first ten years, as of a very stupid time in which she had no fine clothes, no books, saw no company, and was alternately and extravagantly petted and scolded by her "Mamma Effie." She had quite understood, as she grew

older, her aunt's view, that Effie had been exorbitantly paid for her care, and that really this sentimentality and writing and visiting was something of a bore.

Consequently Effie's continual pressing of her claims and attentions, her pets, and angers, and reproaches, soon became a very serious annoyance at Delzel House. Adrienne continually excused herself through Fanchette; and Fanchette took small pains to render the message conciliatory. The servants made unpleasant remarks; madame, the aunt, scarcely returned her courtesy; even Mr. Delzel avoided her. It was all very bitter, far bitterer than any one but her own heart knew, and John was sulkily silent.

Days and weeks of this mental irritation began at last to tell frightfully upon the once hale, positive woman. She had a constant fever; she could not sleep; she gave up gradually all her regular duties; she was sick; she was very sick; doctors were called, and John left everything to watch beside the moaning, wasting form he loved so dearly.

One day, after a terrible night, Effie insisted upon seeing Adrienne. John did not like to go for her; he doubted, indeed, whether she would come. The good doctor offered to make the request; he believed her visit to be the only means of preserving reason, perhaps life; he did not doubt but that Miss Delzel would cheerfully comply with Effie's ardent desire. Not "cheerfully," but she did come, accompanied by her father, and Fanchette bearing

her shawl and parasol. The dying woman took in the trio with a fierce glance as they entered.

"Send her out!" she said, pointing to Fanchette, "and come here, *my child;* I want to whisper to you."

Adrienne demurred, perhaps very naturally so; the firey eyes, the haggard, hollow face, the black, parched lips were terrifying.

"So you won't come to your dying mother! Ungrateful girl, for whom I have lived a lie for seventeen years; for whom I have sinned my soul to death!"

Mr. Delzel now came close enough to Effie.

"Effie MacRae," he said, "you must say more than this. What do you mean? Speak, woman!"

"I mean nothing," she answered sullenly. "Will you come!" to Adrienne. The girl moved reluctantly towards her, she pulled the fair young face down to her own, and said in a fierce, terrible whisper: "You are *my* child? Hah! hah! what will the old Delzels say?"

Adrienne turned sick and faint, she stretched out her hands; but for once Mr. Delzel did not see her. He was pondering on what he had heard, and looking keenly at a fair, young girl, sitting with her face in her hands, gazing mournfully from the open window. Then he turned to the trembling husband.

"John," he said, sternly, "what does your wife mean!"

John was sorely tried. For many a year he had longed for an opportunity to ease his conscience.

He could do it now, but at what a price! Betraying his dying wife. He looked at the face dear to him from childhood, and stooping, said gently:

"Effie, my darling, the master wants to know what you mean; will you tell me?"

She gave him one passionate, entreating glance and shut her lips tightly. So much, and no more; never again could she be persuaded to speak, and next morning speech was impossible; Effie had joined that immense majority whom we call—the dead. After this event, John was absolutely non-committal, not the most subtle of Mr. Delzel's questions moved him, and that gentleman was finally obliged to assure himself that Effie had been either raving or actuated by a spirit of revenge for Adrienne's cold and contemptuous treatment of her advances. So he buried his doubts in his own heart, and gave Adrienne, with great pomp and parade, to her wealthy lover. If there had been any certainty that he was sanctioning a fraud against the dead and the living, Alexander Delzel was the last man to have done such a thing; but what had he but a dying woman's angry, fevered ravings, and a certain expression and attitude in a young girl, which truly resembled his dead wife, but which might also resemble many other women?

John MacRae gave Jessie an inkling of the truth when Andrew Latta re-appeared, but she preferred love and a home in Texas to the heirship of the Delzel name and wealth.

John and Jessie disappeared very quietly, and the years rolled steadily away. Many boys and girls

played up and down the halls and gardens of Delzel, and the old place was alive with youthful merriment and old-fashioned hospitality. This was especially so on Christmas-day, A. D. 1850; then every room was a blaze of light, and fine ladies, and brilliant flowers, and happy children; then there was music and dancing and feasting that brightened all the country-side for miles.

Yet far away on the outskirts of a lonely Texas prairie, in a log-house far removed from any other habitation, a scene was transpiring which might, or might not, seriously affect the fortunes of every one in that brilliant Delzel mansion.

In the large main room of this log-house, a room comfortably, nay, even handsomely furnished, were three people—an old man, calmly and peacefully waiting for the grand change, and a young man and woman, who tenderly and solemnly watched with him.

"There is a paper under my pillow, Andrew," said the dying man—"that is it. Here, Jessie. When I am gone, while yet you think lovingly of me, you and Andrew read this together, and then do as you think best with it. Don't cease to love me!"

"Dear father, never!"

In a few minutes John MacRae was beyond all human judgment, and Jessie and Andrew stood together over the blazing logs on the hearth, reading his late confession. Both remained silent for some time afterwards; then Andrew said:

"Jessie, darling, what would you like to do with this paper? Will you go to your father with it?"

"Andrew I knew these things when I married you. I preferred you then to rank and gold. How much more infinitely do I prefer you now? Have we not enough and to spare? Will not our Phil. be the richest stock-raiser in the State? Is not little Mary's fortune secured? Are we fit for fashionable life? Could we bear to leave this log-house, which we have made so beautiful? And what good would it do to make poor Adrienne and her children miserable? Andrew, my husband, we are wronging no one, not even ourselves. *Let us burn the paper!*"

And Andrew, putting his arm around his wife and kissing her, threw the tardy confession of wrong into the blazing, cedar logs. Without a tear, without a wish, they silently watched it disappear, and then with another kiss, they sealed and ratified their perfect satisfaction with their humbler lot. They turned back with a smile to the duties and loves of a busy and purposeful every-day life.

EARNING ONE'S CAPITAL.

Deacon David Speers was taking his after-dinner smoke. Perhaps the long clay pipe looked a little incongruous with the handsomely furnished room, and the massive silver plate on the mohogany side-board. But for that matter, the deacon himself was an incongruity—a little, common-looking man, not very well dressed, with a Rob Roy bonnet on his head, and knitted, gray, worsted stockings on his slippered feet.

Certainly a very wide contrast to the handsome, stylish-looking young fellow who interrupted his reverie by a very frank and noisy—

"Good evening, uncle. Can I talk awhile with you?"

"That depends, Robin, on what you're gaun to talk aboot. I'm no in a mood for clishma-clavers."

"I want to talk about business, uncle."

"Humph!"

"You know, uncle, that Aleck Lang and I have been long friends."

Aus „Neue Dekapl."

"I have heard so, I don't *know* it."

"Well, we have. To-day Aleck came to tell me that he is going into the carpet-weaving business in Kilmarnock. He intends to buy Thomas Blackie out."

"Hech! He'll need some bawbees for that."

"His father will help, and he asked me to join him. What do you think about it?"

"How long have you been wi' Hastie?"

"Five years."

"And how much have you saved?"

"Well, to tell the truth, uncle, nothing at all. What with Jessie marrying last year and Rosa this, and the presents I had to give, and other expenses, my savings all went away."

"Humph."

"I thought perhaps that as the business was such an old, sure one, and as both the Langs would be interested in it, you would lend me two thousand pounds, for such a wonderfully good chance!"

The old man removed his pipe, and looking Robin in the face, he said

"*I have made it a rule never to lend money to young men.*"

"A very unkind rule, when it touches me, uncle. You were never unkind to me before."

"I am no unkind to you now either, Robin."

"Only two thousand, uncle! And such a chance!"

"Guid heavens, hear the lad! 'Only twa thousand!' Did you ever earn twa thousand pounds? Did ye ever save twa thousand pounds?

When ye have, Robin, come to me an' I'll talk wi' ye aboot lending ye the sum."

"But, uncle, the thing is not a new venture; it is sure to pay."

"It is gaun to hae new masters; an' men at sixty arna sae sure aboot things 'paying' as lads of five-an'-twenty are."

So the young man went away much disappointed and not a little angry; but other friends looked more favorably on the plan. The two thousand pounds were borrowed, and Robert Rae and Aleck Lang bought out the old-established carpet-weaving house of Thomas Blackie.

The first year the concern, in spite of falling prices, did very well. Robert's share of the profits not only gave him a good living, but paid his interest, and allowed him to lay by nearly £100 towards clearing off his borrowed capital; and the next year things were still brighter.

In the fourth year of the enterprise Robert Rae called again on his uncle. He was sitting smoking in just the same dress and attitude.

"Good evening, Uncle David."

"Good evening, Robin. How's business?"

"First rate. I don't come to-night about business."

"Hech! What for then?"

"I am going to be married. I wanted to tell you about it."

"That's a mair kittle risk than Blackie's business, Robin."

"I think not, uncle."

"Wha's the lassie?"

"Jessie Lorimer."

"The minister's daughter?"

"Yes."

"What tocher has she?"

"Just her beauty and her noble nature; she is of good family, too, and has had the best of educations. Why, uncle, she can do most anything—paints, draws, plays the harp, sings like an angel, and—"

"I'm feared she'll be a kind o' matrimonial luxury, Robin. But she's a bonnie bit lassie; I hae seen her; yet I doubt if she's fit for a puir man's wife."

"You'll come to the wedding, uncle?"

"Surely, surely."

It was a very grand wedding, and Uncle Speers made quite a sensation by giving the bride a check for £500. Indeed, Jessie seemed to have quite captivated the old bachelor, and he soon began to spend a great many of his evenings in her pretty home.

Three years passed happily away. In Robert's home there had been some pleasant changes; and Uncle Speers danced a pretty baby Jessie occasionally on his knee, or looked admiringly and wonderingly at his own wee namesake in his cradle. Down at the mill things were apparently equally prosperous—all the looms were at work and the very welfare of Kilmarnock as a community was sensibly connected with the business of "Lang & Rae's Carpet Mill."

But a great deal of this success was only apparent, for it hung upon chances entirely beyond the con-

trol of the young partners in it. They had been compelled to borrow largely, and had big interest accounts to meet, and a great deal of their paper being from houses unknown to local bankers, had to be cashed at very heavy discounts.

All these things were much against them, yet so great was their industry and energy that they might have turned them all into "happy circumstances," and won in spite of the odds against them, if yarns had not suddenly taken a tremendous, and quite unlooked-for fall. This of course was followed by a number of failures, in most of which they suffered. Not all their efforts could now gather together their numerous lines of enterprise, and they found it equally impossible to curtail them, and so, after a few months of desperate, anxious struggle, the firm of "Lang & Rae, Carpet Weavers," appeared in the list of "Sequestrations."

Old David Speers, with that subtle instinct indigenous to capitalists, had long forseen, and resolutely refused to meddle in the matter. A coolness had, therefore, gradually grown up between uncle and nephew, and when the end came David was not among those who offered Robert and Aleck advice and sympathy. The young men behaved well; they surrendered everything, even to their home plenishing; but Scotch creditors are a pitilessly just class, and they did not fail to stigmatize as dishonorable and unbusiness-like the speculative and risky nature of the trade done by the broken firm.

Aleck at once sailed for Sydney, where he had a brother, and Robert took his wife and children to

the manse, while he endeavored to find a situation. But week after week passed, another winter was approaching, and nothing had been done. Once again David Speers was smoking his after-dinner pipe and was interrupted. This time it was his pretty niece Jessie. His face softened wonderfully when he met her large, tearful eyes, and laying down his pipe hurriedly, he went to meet her. The courtesy was a very great one, and it gave Jessie hope and courage.

"Oh, uncle" she said, "we have sore need of you!"

"My puir little woman! Sit down and tell Davie what he can do for you."

Jessie's tale was soon told—her tears told it best —"Roberts heart had quite failed him; they were almost penniless, and they had worn their welcome out at the manse."

"Then you'll come here, my dawtie, you and Robert, and Jessie, and wee Davie; an' we'll see what your man is fit for. If he canna find his feet wi' a wife like you, I'm no sorry for him."

So the next day the family moved, with their small belongings, to David's grand house, very much to the annoyance of Mistress Janet, David's housekeeper. This lady indeed soon made things so unpleasant that it was evident to all parties there could be no delay in a decision, and Robert, almost in desperation resolved on trying his fortune in the New World.

David, pressed by his housekeeper's grumbling, and by his affection for his nephew, knew only of

one other way—he could advance Robert money for a new effort; "but it would be the ruin o' the lad," he said thoughtfully: "I'm doubting if he's learnt his lesson yet; he must e'en go to school again." So he praised Robert's suggestion and offered to pay the passage of the whole family, and give him £100 to start life with.

Rather grumblingly the offer was accepted and in a few days they were on the ocean, not one of them aware of the real interest and affection which followed them—"but they'll write to me," said David to himself, "they'll write, for they ken I hae plenty o' siller."

Once on a new track, all Robert's energy returned. He sought information from all he met, and when they arrived in New York, he had a very clear idea of the direction he ought to take. Provided with a letter which a fellow-passenger had given him to the proprietors of the Mattatook Carpet Mills, he found his way there and readily obtained work. A part of his £100 was used in furnishing a little cottage, and Robert enjoyed a degree of peace and comfort to which he had long been a stranger.

The next spring a lucky event gave him a special prominence. A large mill in the neighborhood imported some machinery for weaving a peculiar kind of rug, and no one could be found in the locality able to make it run smoothly. Robert heard of the dilemma and offered his help. The loom was familiar to him; his success easy. He had found his place, and he knew it; day by day he

made his skill and energy felt. He rose to be overseer—business-manager—partner.

Still he varied very little the quiet simplicity of his home. Jessie and he had found out how little they really needed for happiness, and so, year by year, whatever they saved was invested in real estate. The land grew in value while they slept and worked at other things, and ten years after Robert's first investment he found himself, by the simple growth of the village, a very rich man.

Just about this time Uncle David sent them a very urgent request to come and see him, and as he offered to pay all expenses it was accepted. The old man was now nearing eighty, yet he was wonderfully hale and bright, and met them at the steamer, apparently little older for the ten years that had elapsed since he bid them "good-by" on the very same spot. He liked Robert's way at the first glance ; "he has the look o' a man wi' siller, an he bears himsel' well. I'se wager he's a full purse in his pouch."

Another thing made a still more favorable impression on David ; Robert was not anxious to speak on business. Indeed, David had at last to ask bluntly :

"Weel, Robin, what kind o' kintra is yon ?"

"It is a great country, uncle !"

"You'll hae done weel, I suppose ?"

"Very well."

A long pause.

"You'll no be needing ony help now ? I have money lying idle."

"Thank you, Uncle David; but I have fifty thousand dollars lying idle myself. I thought some of investing it here, if I can find just the machinery I want."

"You're gaun to manufacturing again?"

"Yes; I know all the ins and outs of the trade—there is a good opening in our town. Yes, I am thinking about it."

"You'll no be wanting a partner, eh?"

"If I can get the right kind."

"Would I do?"

"You! Uncle!"

"Well, yes, laddie; an' you needna scorn at me. I'll put a hundred thousand to your fifty, an' we'll ca' the firm 'Rae & Speers.'"

"You could not leave Scotland, uncle."

"Was I thinking o' sic a daft thing? I'll trust my interest i' your hands I'll hae my full rights, mind; an' you shall hae a fair allowance for doing my wark as well as your ain. We'll put everything on paper, and I'se hold you strictly to the bargain."

The proposal, made half in banter, finally assumed a very real shape, and it was agreed that when Robert returned to America he should start a new manufacturing firm under very different auspices to his first venture.

But the past was only once alluded to, and then David introduced the subject.

"You'll be thinking, Robin, very likely, o' the day when I wouldna lend you the twa thousand pounds."

"You were quite right, uncle; no man ought to

borrow money until he knows the difficulty of making it—and of saving it; young men can't know these things; they belong to experience."

"You had that lesson to learn then, Robin, an' I thought ye might as weel learn it o' ither folk as o' me. One fool whiles teaches anither fool, an' both grow wise thegither. Sandy McClure lent ye that twa thousand, and he was nane the waur o' the lesson ye gave him. There would be fewer young fools if there were mair wise elders."

So Robert's visit was a great success, and the old man shed the last tears he ever shed on earth when he bid the children good-by.

"You'll tak' care o' wee Davie for my sake, Robin," he said tenderly, holding the lad proudly by the hand, "for when I'm no longer to the fore, you'll let my name stand i' the firm, till he's ready to tak' my place; so then the hundred thousand will aye be in David Speers' name."

And to-day the house grows and prospers, and is known far and wide as the firm of "Robert Rae & David Speers," though old David has long been gathered to his fathers in Kilmarnock kirkyard. Robert's early failure has brought forth a late and splendid success, and better than this, his kind-heartedness has almost become a local proverb.

"I make it a rule never to lend money to young men, but if you want to go West or South I'll buy you a ticket, and give you fifty dollars. If the right stuff is in you, that is enough—if not, it is plenty to make 'ducks and drakes of.'"

But somehow very few young men that Robert Rae helps do make "ducks and drakes" of his fifty dollars. In many and many a case it has been an ample foundation for a good life and a good fortune.

Young men, earn your own capital!

A Brave Girl.

I am not inclined to disparage the physical bravery involved in facing bastions and taking cities ; but I do say that this is not the most difficult side of the virtue, and that there are moral victories won in daily life evincing more honorable and enduring courage.

Mattie was the only child of Major John Darley, a man who had done great service in the Mexican war, and been rewarded for it by an honorable and lucrative government office.

He lived in good style, in a handsome house, and Mattie was generally understood to be as well off in money matters as she was attractive in person and winning in manners. She visited in the most fashionable circles, and was rather noted for her pretty toilets and the number of her beaux.

Mattie had, however, made her choice. Unreservedly she had given her affections to Mark Taylor, a young man of no particular family, but of handsome exterior and fair business prospects. Many indeed wondered at the major sanctioning the

match ; but there are always reasons within reasons, and the poor father had his private motives for forwarding the views of the man who seemed most in earnest about marrying Mattie.

But before Mattie's pretty wardrobe was finished, and while the lovers were yet undecided as to whether the wedding was to be a public or private one, Major Darley was found dead in bed one morning, and the house of pleasant anticipations became a house of mourning.

This was but the beginning of Mattie's troubles. Vague but terrible rumors of suicide and ruin began to be heard, and Mattie, even in the first gush of sympathy for her desolate condition, could feel that indefinable something which expressed disapprobation as well as pity ; and after the funeral was over she was quite sensible that her acquaintances and friends were ready to stand aloof from her at the first good opportunity.

The world, upon the whole, is not flagrantly unjust ; it thought it had good reason for its disapprobation. Major Darley had done wrong ; he had squandered money not his own, and poverty *and dishonor* it refuses to sanction. In the main it is right ; and when Mattie knew all, and knew also that it was generally believed that her father had slunk into the grave because he was afraid to face the wrong he had done, she did not much blame the world ; she knew it must judge men and women on general rules.

But she did blame Mark, for he had no such excuse. He had made particular promises to her,

and her alone. But when misfortune does not strengthen love, it kills it; and before Major Darley was in the grave, Mark's behavior had lost something of its respect, and he soon became querulous and inattentive. Mattie did not hesitate long. In a few dignified lines she gave him his dismissal, and it was coolly accepted, with a very unmanly and ungenerous reflection upon the dead.

Then the poor girl began seriously to consider her future. There was absolutely nothing for her but the furniture of the house in which she lived, and the half-and-half invitations which she had received from her two aunts to make her home for a time with them. One had a large family, and lived in a pretty Jersey village; the other was an invalid, and travelled a great deal.

She sold the furniture at auction, paid out of it her father's funeral expenses, and found that she had about sixteen hundred dollars left. Upon the whole, the invalid aunt seemed the most desirable, and she accepted her invitation first. It was the beginning of summer, and Mrs. Dayton was going to Europe "for her health." Mattie was to go with her, but it was not until everything was arranged that Mattie found she was expected to pay her own passage. She drew four hundred dollars and went to sea with a heavy heart.

The next six months was a simple record of an imaginary invalid's whims and unreasonable tyranny; and Mattie took under these circumstances her first lessons in that knowledge which teaches:

> "How salt the savor is of others' bread!
> How hard the passage to descend and climb
> By others' stairs."

And in spite of all Mattie's efforts and humiliations, she did not please. Mrs. Dayton and her niece parted at last on very bad terms.

She had still nine hundred dollars, and she found herself one morning in June in a New York boarding-house, asking her heart twenty times an hour, "What shall I do with it?" One morning she lifted a paper and eagerly ran her eye over the "Wants." This paragraph supplied her with the idea on which she rested a very prosperous future:

"WANTED—A thoroughly artistic, professional cook. A liberal salary given and two assistants allowed. Apply, &c."

Now, if there was one thing for which Mattie had a natural aptitude, it was the making of delicacies and the beautiful arrangement of a table.

"Why should I not learn how to do this thing?" she said. "This very day I will see about it."

She had to take many a fruitless walk and to bear a good deal of impertinent curiosity before she found what she wanted—a professional cook willing to impart the secrets of her art for an equivalent in cash. Even then he could not take her until the winter season made grand dinners in demand, and Mattie was forced to content herself with an engagement to the great artist in the following October.

Did she live on her small means in the interval? She took a situation as saleswoman in a retail store, and immediately began to sell trimmings and laces. Not unfrequently she had to wait on ladies at whose houses she had visited and with whom she had frequently spent the morning shopping not eighteen months before. Some ignored the fact, and treated her as a simple shop girl, and some spoke to her in that tone of constrained kindness still harder to bear. Others whispered to their companions, as they passed, her name and reverses; but, after all, she was amazed to find how little these things hurt her.

Still she was honestly glad one morning to receive a note from Professor Deluce requesting her services. In a plain, neat dress, with her large apron and linen sleeves in her satchel, she entered at daylight one of the principal hotels and took her way resolutely to the professor's rooms. He set her to work with a very few words, and day after day, week after week, she assisted him in the production of the most wonderful dinners and suppers.

When the winter was over the professor was willing to endorse his pupil in all things, and he offered to secure her a position for the summer months. Mattie very gratefully accepted his offer, and in a few days he was able to make an engagement for her at a fashionable summer hotel. She was to have one thousand dollars for the season and two assistants.

For five years Mattie spent her summers at this hotel, and her winters with some rich private family,

making about fifteen hundred dollars a year and saving nearly every dollar of it. For she had in view the opening of a large private hotel, and she knew that in order to get the necessary funds she must herself be willing to risk a respectable sum.

So she was patient and industrious, and the day on which she was thirty years of age saw her the mistress of a magnificently furnished mansion, every room of which had been taken before it was opened. For by this time Mattie's skill was well known to wealthy epicures, and it was considered something of a privilege to sit at a table she provided for, or live in a house she ordered.

But though obliged now to dress as became the lady of such a house, she never relaxed her patient attention to the smallest detail of her duty, and her boarders knew that the elegantly dressed women who presided at the table, had been hours before in a linen blouse and cap busy among her bright saucepans for their benefit and enjoyment; and the knowledge detracted nothing from the respect and admiration every one delighted to give her.

In three years Mattie had paid off the last cent of the money she had borrowed in order to start her enterprise. And henceforward she began to make money and save money for Mattie Darley alone. She was still handsome and had many admirers, but she was of that order of women who love once and no more, and many things about Mark's desertion of her had left a sting in her heart which no future love could extract. She did not know whether he remembered her or not; she had

heard while in Europe that he was going to marry an old companion of hers, but that was twelve years ago, and twelve years rolled in between two lives generally effectually separate them.

When she was thirty-six years of age and a rich woman, she had an offer of marriage. She refused it, but the circumstances set her thinking about Mark in a very persistent manner. She determined to make some cautious inquiries about him; she was too old now for him to attribute any silly motive to her. The resolution ran in her mind for two or three days, and she determined one afternoon to go and find out an old friend likely to be familiar with Mark's doings.

But while she was dressing, an English nobleman came to rent a suite of rooms, and was so full of crotchets and orders, that she thought it best to remain in the house. He was very peculiar and insisted upon having all his meals in his own room; but as he paid extravagantly for the privilege, and kept his own servant to attend upon him, Mattie thought it worth her while to humor so good a guest.

She soon found, however, this strange servant a very uneasy element in her kitchen affairs. In a week her own maids were at open war with him; and she heard so much about his delightful singing and elegant manners that her curiosity was somewhat excited. One morning as she was coming down stairs, dressed to go out, she saw the wine-colored livery of my lord's servant coming towards her with a tray, containing delicacies for his master's

breakfast. As they passed each other Mattie looked steadily into the man's face, and saw Mark Taylor!

He recognized her in the same moment, but with the instinct of a little mind pretended not to know her. After his stare and silence there was nothing left for Mattie to say. She had been going to seek him, and lo! even as a servant he would not know her. The next day the servant's parlor was desolate. Mark had left my lord's service.

It might be four years after this event that Mattie one bitter, snowy day received a letter which greatly agitated her. She was a very wealthy woman now, and though she still kept her hotel she also kept her private carriage. After half-an-hour's troubled and uncertain thought, she ordered it, and greatly to the amazement of her servant, requested to be driven to a very disreputable part of the city. It was even hard for the vehicle to make its way to the wretched tenement she indicated, and Mattie's heart sunk at the filthy, slushy court and dark noisome stairs before her.

I might say that love made her regardless of these things, but that would not be true. There was no love in Mattie's heart now for Mark Taylor, but his note had said he was dying, and she had not found herself able to refuse his last request. Indeed, she half doubted him now, for during the past two years he had begged money from her, under every possible pretext; and there was now more fear and contempt in her pity for her old lover than any lingering trace of affection.

But this time he had told the truth. Mattie barely

got there in time to hear his last words—a pathetic entreaty for a half-starved little lad sobbing his poor childish heart out for his dying father. The child loved Mark—that almost redeemed Mark in Mattie's eyes; she promised faithfully to bring up the boy as her own, and she kissed and forgave at the last the poor, weak, heartless man. After the miserably selfish failure of his life, it was something to die with his child in his arms and the woman who had once loved him so dearly dropping tears upon his face and praying humbly for his peace.

So Mattie buried Mark, and took to her home Mark's little Roland. At first it was not altogether a pleasure. The love for other people's children is not an instinct. But Ronald had a handsome person and bright, bold manners; he won his way surely and rapidly, and Mattie, in his case, made true the sarcasm of a proverb, for this "old maid's bairn *was* well taught and well bred."

About five years after Mark's death, Mattie sold her business and bought the loveliest of lovely farms. She came to the country with the intention of taking life easy and enjoying the fruits of her twenty years of hard though pleasant labor. But Mattie can't help making money, and her berries and vines, her milk and butter and grains are the wonder of the country. When any one in our little community is sick, or blue, or tired, we go and see Mattie; when the church or the Sunday school want a delightful meeting, or a pleasant picnic, they have it at Mattie's place. If a young girl has any trouble about her wedding-clothes she goes to Mat-

tie; if the elders can't raise our good minister's salary, Mattie puts matters all straight.

Everybody loves Mattie Darley; even her aunts come to see her, now, for sooner or later we pardon our friends the injuries we have done them.

Now suppose Mattie had hung on to her aunts in wretched dependence. Suppose that she had dragged out a half-existence trying to teach what she did not herself understand. Suppose that at the best she had married for a living some man whom she did not love. How much nobler to accept the humble work she was fit for, and dignify it by conscientious, intelligent and artistic practice!

"You were a brave little woman, Mattie," I once said to her, "to dare the scorn of friends and the descent from social position that the profession of cooking entailed."

"Independence," she replied, "can brave a great deal. None of my employers ever said a disrespectful word to me. No one pitied, or patronized, or pretended not to see me. It is as great a pleasure as life affords, to have work to do which you like to do, and get well paid for doing it."

"But with your stylish bringing-up and your gentle birth!"

"My friend, take your stylish bringing-up and your gentle birth to market, and see what they will buy you. I love Roland dearly, and he will have plenty of money, but if he wanted to make a shoe, or learn how to sow a dress-coat, I hope he'd be man enough to go and do it."

JUST AS IT HAPPENED.

Good fortune stands waiting for us at many a corner of life, but we are too selfish, blind or uncourteous to salute her ; for sometimes she wears such odd disguises that we do not recognize the good fairy in some miserable old woman or irritating visitor. And yet all our fortune for good or evil may hang upon one generous or one selfish action ; therefore, if we would control our destiny, we must learn to control ourselves.

Few women at twenty years of age have learned this great lesson, but Barbara Reed had been under a wonderful teacher. Poverty had set her hard tasks, and introduced her into strange ways, and among queer people ; but she had found that in all the homes of want, virtue and loving-kindness had there also a dwelling-place.

It was a cold, dreary day in mid-winter, and she was hurrying towards the little room which she called home. It was near five o'clock ; she had been giving music lessons since nine in the morning,

and she really was exhausted, though she did not know it, for in her heart was a little well-spring of hope that gladdened all the dreary vistas of life. "How handsome he is! how good and kind!" that was how she strengthened herself when she met the keen, east wind, or felt the blocks lengthening before her; and so at last she turned the well known corner, and began to feel for her latch-key.

Just then there came out of the grocery an old woman whom she knew well by sight, and whose temper and tongue were the terror of the tenement and the neighborhood in which she lived. She was evidently in a rage, and was unsparingly denouncing the little Dutchman who had followed her with explanations to the door. That there was a quarrel between Ellen O'Connor and Hans Bohling, did not concern Barbara, but when Ellen, turning quickly around to fire one Parthian shot, fell headlong on the slippery pavement, that was another thing. True, for one moment the dainty, gentle little lady hesitated to speak to such a dreadful virago, but the rude laughter on all sides, and the poor creature's irrepressible cry of anguish, decided her.

It was, however, impossible to move her; some bone was broken; and she hastened to procure help to carry her home, and a doctor to attend her. In less than five minutes help was there, and Barbara, unmindful of her own weary condition, waited tenderly upon the poor, fainting sufferer. When the bone had been set, and the doctor was gone away, she then became conscious of a low sobbing in the next room.

"It's my little Mike," said the woman, in a voice thick with emotion; "he often watches you at nights, Miss; please to say a word to comfort him."

"Little Mike" proved to be a boy of about fourteen years of age, crippled, and suffering then from a severe fever. Barbara espoused these two poor invalids with all her heart; every moment she could spare from her duties she was with them. This little, musical lady carried more in her head now than mere crotchets—she had found a place there for the rough woman and the suffering child, and she laid all sorts of little plans for their relief and pleasure.

They did not seem to be poor or in actual necessity; from an old-fashioned leather purse under her pillow, Ellen gave whatever money was necessary for food and medicine; and by the hands of a young priest, who waited very lovingly on little Mike, she saw her send an offering of gratitude to the church. Poverty in all its hard realities was not in Ellen's home, but poverty in all its bare unloveliness was there. Nothing but actual necessities furnished their two rooms. No books or pictures were visible, there was not even a pot of geraniums or a little canary.

The woman's language proved her to have been an educated woman, and her thoughtful, self-denying love for her crippled child proved her capacity for deep and tender affection. Yet it was easy enough to see that her evil name in the neighborhood was not undeserved; paroxysms of passion shook her with almost insane power, and her tongue

was then entirely given up to the demon who ruled her. No one, perhaps, but Barbara had ever seen that equally appalling passions of remorse and repentance followed ; for if it is only God who knows the worst of us, it is also only God who knows the best of us.

Entirely helpless and quite dependent upon Barbara, she revealed more of herself to her in a few weeks than ever she had done before to any earthly friend or acquaintance ; and Barbara grew to love her, and to look forward with a real pleasure to coming home at night and taking her cup of tea beside the sick woman and boy. The cold, hard winter delayed their recovery, and it was early spring before they could venture to sit up. But one bright evening, Barbara got home early, the window was thrown up, and they all took tea together.

Mike was now able to limp about a little, and he told Barbara he had been " studying and working all day." She was a little astonished, but did not like to ask him, " What at ?" Yet she noticed a strange change in the boy's face; it was as if a cloud had passed away from over it, the great brown eyes were fairly luminous, the broad ample brow unwrinkled by pain or care, and the hollow cheeks had a vivid glow of color on them. All his pathetic, mournful manner had fled ; he laughed softly, and seemed thoroughly happy. Now for the first time was clearly evident the passionate love which existed between mother and son ; if he passed her even he touched her gently, and at such touches she glanced

at him in return with a look which made her stern, cold face almost angelic.

Something of the same look lingered on it as she watched Barbara washing up the tea cups, and putting the room in order. Barbara was very pleasant to watch at all times, but especially so to-night; for she was dressed for some simple merry-making, and the light of expectation was in her eyes.

A few days after this, Barbara sent Ellen word that she was sick, and the poor woman looked in vain for her light footstep and low, pleasant voice. Mike was just as eager and expectant, but it was the evening of the second day's absence before she made her appearance. Then, somehow, it was another Barbara. No mere physical suffering had so changed the bright, sweet face; no mere physical suffering caused the great, gray eyes to fill with tears, and the poor little lips to quiver and tremble with suppressed feeling.

Ellen watched her with a keen and troubled look. Mike was so glad to see her back. He noticed no change; besides, he was full of his own revelations. To-night he was going to show Barbara all his drawings, and tell her all his plans. And she was much touched to find that this boy-artist had beguiled many a long hour—before he had ever spoken to her—in sketching her. He had pictures of her in every dress, and in every attitude—in her trim walking-dress, with her music-roll in her hand, and in her house-dress with her canary on her finger.

It pleased Ellen greatly to see Barbara's enthusiasm; then she began to explain.

"Mike," she said, "had begun to draw when his back was much worse, and he could not walk at all —the young priest, whom Barbara had seen, had brought him copies, and paper and pencils, and as soon as his health would allow him to study regularly, Mike had a friend who would see he had every advantage."

Then she became wonderfully silent for her, and watched Mike and Barbara with intent, anxious solicitude; anon she fingered her rosary; her lips moved—she was praying for them.

Evidently in this act, she made up her mind upon some point which she had been considering. She walked towards the window where the two bent over one of Mike's sketches of Barbara, and said:

"Mike, honey! go to bed now, or else it's little enough you'll be worth in the morning."

The boy obeyed her at once, and Barbara lifted her hat to go.

"Stay," said Ellen, "stay, Barbara; I want to speak to you; come here and sit beside me."

Barbara stayed, just a little reluctantly, for the strain of the evening had pressed sorely on her; her endurance was almost gone. She wanted to be alone, and have a good cry. Ellen knew it; she drew her gently down beside her, and said:

"Cry here, my dear. I had a daughter once; praised be the saints, she is in heaven now!"

Then Barbara broke down, and burying her face in her arms, cried softly and sorrowfully.

"Now, *who is he*, honey? For it's only the men surely that make a woman cry in that way."

"Oh, Ellen, he loves me so dearly, but—"

"He can't marry you, eh?"

"He is so rich, and—"

"You are so poor; very much he loves you! Pshaw!"

"Ellen, you don't understand; there are so many ways."

"Only two ways, Barbara. A right way and a wrong one; mostly men take the wrong one."

"Don't say so about Edgar; it is not his fault; I will tell you how it is. I teach his sister music. Once they went out unexpectedly, and he came into the music-room to apologize, and then afterwards he was always meeting me on the stairs, or in the street, and finally he wrote and asked me to be his wife. I was so happy, and we were both happy for four months; soon he told his mother, and she— Oh, I hope I may never see a woman behave again as she behaved to me."

"Did she get in a passion like I do?" asked Ellen, with a queer interest in her voice.

"No; she was worse than that; she was perfectly calm and cold. She said the most cruel, shameful things in the politest way, put a check into my hand for the lessons I had given, and then ordered the footman to open the door for me. I was so shocked that I could not answer her, nor did I see until I got home that she had underpaid me for my services."

Ellen's eyes blazed and she become so excited that Barbara said:

"Now, Ellen, be still, or I won't go on. I kept the check, intending to have it rectified as soon as I felt equal to facing her; besides, I hoped to hear from Edgar. I waited two days, and there was no message; but the next day was the Sabbath. I sang in the choir of the church his family attended; I should at any rate see him; and if he was unchanged, a glance would be sufficient. Sunday morning's paper contained his name among the list of European passengers, and on Monday morning I got a letter from him, upbraiding me *for taking money from his mother* as an equivalent for his love. Be still, Ellen; mind, this is my wrong, not yours, and you shall not get into a passion about it.

"I saw at once what lie had been told him. I knew the soft, plausible manner in which she would say:

"'Oh, Edgar, dear! I spoke to that Miss—Miss—I've really forgotten her name—you know, that little music teacher you fancy yourself in love with; and really, now, I found her a sensible kind of girl. When I explained how impossible marriage and that kind of thing was, and how much more sensible a positive sum of money might be, she saw the thing at once—clever little girl! Edgar, you had better take a little trip to Europe, I think, dear.'

"I knew something like this took place, just as well as if I had heard and seen it. I knew how Edgar despised me, and how angry he must have been before he could have written the cold bitter farewell he did. It has been a dreadful trial, Ellen!"

"Poor child! Poor child! What will you do?"

"I have kept the check—I mean to keep it. When he comes home I shall send it to him along with a statement of my real claim. In the meantime, I must bear the knowledge that he believes me a perfectly sordid, false woman."

"Have you any mother, Barbara?"

"No, Ellen."

"Any father?"

"He died at sea before I was born."

"Any brothers, or friends?"

"None but you, Ellen—I think you are my friend."

"God in heaven knows I am, child!"

There was a long silence; then Ellen began in a low, monotonous voice:

"Barbara, listen. I was well-born and had a good education; but what can anything avail a woman who marries foolishly? I married *below* myself—a woman had better die than do that. I married a drunkard, a brute in man's form; he raised in me the devil that still rules me, and that no one has ever controlled but you. Once, in a drunken fit, he was going to beat little Mike. I rushed on him like a lion: I don't know which of us did it, but the baby was hurt. After that I could not endure him. I took the boy and went away and hid myself. The woman I lodged with taught me her trade—a carpet maker—and when Mike was so I could leave him, I got good work; I rose to be forewoman before the end of the second year."

"And your husband?"

"He is dead—do not speak of him ; I lived only for my boy and my work. I have never made a friend but you. Mike loves you ! to hear you play and sing is like a dream of heaven to him. If you'll come and live with us, we'll take better rooms, and I'll try and never get angry again."

All the neighborhood wondered and laughed when Barbara took the whole floor of the little brick house in which she lodged, and the Widow O'Connor and her crippled son moved over there. But Barbara let them laugh, and the widow went to her work again, and made a vow that never a word she'd say to any of their remarks. Strange as the partnership was, it turned out splendidly. Barbara found a new pleasure in coming home now ; her tea was always ready, her room cheerful, and Mike's welcome waiting.

Mike soon began to study at the Academy, and to spend his leisure hours poring over the art treasures in the Astor Library ; then he had dreams of Italy, the fatherland of painters. Ellen said little, but she listened to Mike and Barbara talking with a strange interest ; for Barbara, too, had dreamed of Italy for years. To be sure, the dream never seemed likely to come true now ; Edgar indeed had promised, but that promise had been a dream also.

Yet all that summer something was the matter with Ellen. She was often absent on messages about which she said nothing ; she worked with incredible industry ; she strove to recall, both in dress and manner, the polish of her youth. She was neither old nor unhandsome, and Barbara began

to think she was going to marry again. But she had a deeper plan than this.

One evening, in the end of October, she said:

"Mike, Barbara, if you wish, we shall all start for Italy next month."

There was something so serious and yet so glad in her voice that it was impossible to make a joke of it.

"Yes, dears," she said in reply to their joyful exclamations; "I have got eleven thousand dollars, and I am told that if we live as we do now, the sum is sufficient to get you both good masters and live upon until you are able to do something."

"But the money, mother—how did you get it?"

"Earned it, Mike. Do you think I have worked fourteen years, as hard as I have done, never spending an unnecessary penny, for nothing? Besides, I have had interest gathering all the time. I meant to leave you above want, Mike, but One who always gives me good advice, says I had better give you a profession than a bank-book; and so I will, if you wish it."

Barbara's objections were soon overruled; neither Ellen or Mike would go without her; they needed her to speak for them—they needed her every way—they would not hear of a separation. So the whole three left the following month for Rome. No one took any notice of their departure, no one knew or cared about it, and yet it was a step of vital importance to them.

It proved to be also a very fortunate one. It was soon evident that it was from Ellen O'Connor Mike

inherited his artistic nature, and now, in a proper atmosphere, the woman's better and nobler instincts rapidly developed themselves. Barbara's singing and Mike's pictures were a constant enthusiasm to her, and the finer growth soon left no room for the coarser. Barbara, though she had watched the change, could scarcely believe that the serene, graceful woman haunting churches, and studios, and operas, was the passionate virago she had first seen.

In three years Barbara made her debut, and made it a triumph. Ellen cried with joy, and Mike drew transfigured pictures of her in all her characters. Barbara was still his model and his ideal. One evening, as they were curiously turning over some of Mike's earliest sketches, they came upon a rough picture of herself in her trim, gray alpaca walking-dress, with a music-roll in her hand. She looked long at the picture; she had worn that very suit the night Edgar Hill had told her he loved her; she asked Mike to paint one from it, and Mike, only too happy to do what Barbara desired, made an exquisite picture of "the little music teacher."

Mike's studio had become by this time a favorite resort of men of leisure and genius, a place of note to be visited by strangers. One day a party of Americans called, and among them was a tall, listless, handsome man, who declined everything but a sofa and a fan. He vowed he had "seen so many fine pictures he never wanted to see another;" so the party went round the studio without him.

In an absent, indolent manner, he wheeled round

the chair out of the sun, and found himself face to face with Barbara's picture. If he had seen a ghost he could scarcely have been more profoundly affected. His anxiety about the picture and the original revealed the man's identity to Mike, who knew the story of Barbara's love affair. It was Mr. Edgar Hill—he never doubted it—and now Barbara should be righted. He agreed to sell him the picture, but desired him to call at seven o'clock that evening for his terms.

At seven Mr. Hill was waiting before the picture; at a few minutes past seven Barbara came tripping into the room. Mike, with a self-denial few could understand, withdrew, and Barbara had the opportunity she had longed for and dreamed of for years.

Now, if I was writing an imaginary story, I should say that the wicked mother was put to shame, and the lovers made happy; but things in real life do not always happen story-book fashion. In the first place, Mrs. Hill could never have been made to feel ashamed; she thought that she had acted in a very prudent, sensible way, and she maintained it. In the second, Barbara had long outlived her love for Edgar Hill. She would have had to stoop mentally —which is worse than stooping socially—to marry him, and she remembered that Ellen O'Connor had said: "A woman had better die than marry below herself."

She was glad to have had the opportunity to deny the degrading charge that had been made against her, but she bid her old lover "good-by" without a regret. Mrs. Hill went to see her in "Norma,"

and talked patronizingly to her party about the "little Barbara Reed whom she had once been so good to;" and a year afterwards, when she had returned to Rome and found her Princess Romola, begged tickets for her entertainments.

Is my tale improbable? Believe it because it is improbable; for fiction has nothing in all its realms to compare with the romances of every-day life.

THE DRUID'S MOSS.

"A man's hat in his hand never did him any harm, Stephen, and I wish dear, you had been a little more civil to Uncle Joseph."

"Nonsense, Maggie, darling. I don't like Joseph Hawick and his ways, and I am not going to pretend I do."

"His ways are very good ways. No one can say wrong of Uncle Joseph, Stephen."

"That is just it; they are too good. I rather think I am old enough to know what I am doing, and what I want. I have a good farm, I don't owe a penny, and I never mean to ask a favor except of you, or of my own hands. If I palavered over Joseph Hawick, he would be the very first to say I wanted the trifle of money he may have saved."

Maggie sighed, and then looked up into Stephen's handsome face and smiled. Stephen, of course, was right; a man with such eyes and such a figure could not, in love's sight, be wrong. He was brave and confident, too, and had that way of assertion which only very cool and sensible people can resist.

Uncle Joseph sighed too, but it was a different

sigh to Maggie's. He loved his neice with a wise and tender affection, and she had not chosen the husband that he would have chosen for her. Stephen Gray was indeed "well-to-do," and had a fair character, but the keen old man saw radical defects in it.

"He listens to no one but himself, and so he hears no advice but a flatterer's," said Joseph; "besides, Maggie, he is so proud, that I'm feared he's bound to have a tumble."

"But, uncle, he has a big heart, and he's a good farmer, and even you can see that he is the handsomest man in the Dales."

"That is all true, girl, but God does not measure men by inches."

However, in spite of all disaffection, Maggie Hawick's wedding with Stephen Gray came off with great and widespread hospitality. Joseph Hawick had been for forty years the physician and friend of all the Dale families, rich and poor, and not one of them missed an invitation. The gentry feasted in the oak-raftered parlor, and the shepherds and cotters in the big barn. But all were merry and full of good wishes for the pretty bride and her handsome husband.

The number of bridal presents Maggie received testified to it. Stephen's sideboard and buffet would be bright with silver tokens; and his presses full of snowy damask and fine-spun linen and blankets. But upon the whole, it rather mortified him. He could not feel the loving-kindness that sanctified the gifts, and the obligation was not pleasant to the self-sufficient young man. He had assured Uncle

Joseph voluntarily, and with rather unnecessary pride, that he wanted nothing with Maggie, neither gold, nor gear, nor land; and yet, for all that, he looked rather anxiously for the old man's offering.

Joseph Hawick was believed, in spite of his eccentric attentions to poor patients, to "have money," and Stephen felt that a handsome check on Kendal Bank, or a few Government bonds, would not be out of place; for he had been at some expense in refurnishing the old farm-house, and he was very anxious to try some new scientific experiments with his worn-out land.

But Maggie said nothing about her uncle's present, and Stephen was far too proud to ask her, until nearly a year after their marriage. But one day he had a long talk with old Squire Thwaites about "high farming," and then the two men drifted into the discussion of some scheme for the draining of Druid's Moss. Then Stephen, thinking it all over as he smoked his pipe by the blazing ingle, saw untold wealth of harvest from the rich alluvial soil, and fabulous wheat-fields growing where men now caught leeches, or shot wild fowl.

If he only had money! If he only had £1,000 in cash! Thwaites and he would buy and drain the Moss. He sat dreaming over the project, and counted the acres and bushels over and over, until he began to look upon Druid's Moss as the one thing upon earth to be desired.

"Maggie," he said, suddenly, to the little wife, sewing and gently rocking herself beside him,

"Maggie, what did Uncle Joseph give you for a wedding present? You never told me."

"I thought you would not like it, Stephen."

"Very likely not, but nevertheless, what was it?"

"A Bible."

"Just like him; and we had two family ones to begin with, not to speak of the little ones you have in every room."

"In the same way, Stephen, people gave us napkins enough for three generations, and silver mugs enough to serve all our friends. Uncle's Bible was by no means an ordinary one."

"How not?"

"It has been in the Hawick household since A. D. 1616, and contains the family register for more than two hundred years. I am the last of our branch; uncle thought I would like to have it. It is a queer old book, with great brass clasps. I made uncle two solemn promises over it."

"What were they?"

"That I would never part with it under any circumstances, unless it was to give it again in his charge, and—and—"

"Well, what else?"

"That when every other scource of help and comfort failed me, I would go to it—don't look so angry, Stephen."

"I think I have good cause to be angry; it was like a prophecy of ill-fortune. Why should he forespeak sorrow for you? And why should he suppose that you would need help or comfort I could not

give you? If he had given you a thousand pounds it would have been more to the purpose."

Maggie looked quickly up. She had never heard such a sentiment from Stephen's lips before. Then she laughed gayly:

"A thousand pounds, Stephen! Why, what on earth should we do with so much money?"

"Buy and drain Druid's Moss, Maggie."

Maggie drew her eyebrows together, and looked wonderingly at Stephen, who had risen and was pacing the floor with rapid, thoughtful steps.

"Why, love," she said anxiously, "what can you mean? The Druid's Moss! What is that worth?"

"A few leeches and wild birds now, Maggie, but acres and acres of golden wheat and rich meadow grass, if it is drained. I was talking with Thwaites about it to-day; both our uplands are worn out—the Moss lies between us—I would give five years of my life to own half of it, and money sufficient to drain and cultivate it."

"How much money would do, Stephen?"

"A thousand pounds. I could drain part and then save the proceeds to drain the rest. But where could I get the money?"

"I was thinking of Uncle Joseph. Would you let me ask him?"

Nothing is so wonderful as the growth of a master passion. In a few hours the desire for this particular piece of land had strengthened itself so that Stephen began to consider whether it might not be worth while to let his wife go borrowing for him, and the longer he talked the more eager he became,

so that at last Maggie felt hurt to see what a trifle he made of her feelings, and of the risk Joseph Hawick would run.

However, next day she went to see the old man, and as they sat together over their tea and crumpets, said :

"Uncle, Stephen wants to join Squire Thwaites in buying the Druid's Moss."

"What for ? To raise cranberries ?"

"Uncle ! why they talk of great wheatfields and meadows."

"It will need a sight of drainage, and that means a sight of money. I should not think Stephen had idle cash sufficient."

"He wants to borrow it."

Joseph's face clouded.

"Wonders never cease. I thought Stephen Gray would starve before he would borrow or owe money."

"Don't cast up the past, uncle. Stephen thinks if he could borrow a thousand pounds he would make it ten in a very few years ; and, uncle, I came to-day to ask you to lend him it."

"You came a useless journey, Maggie ; forbye I don't like that pride that makes others stoop for its conceit."

"Squire Thwaites said you had plenty of money in Kendal Bank."

"If I had money I'd never trust it in any bank ; but I make no more than I need now. I am getting an old man, Maggie."

"Stephen will be sorely disappointed."

"He has no call to be so. I told him you would have no fortune, and he quite scorned at the thought of money with you; he had his choice between you and Kate Crofts with the Croft Manor at her will."

The old man was quite gloomy after this talk, and Maggie was almost glad to escape from the silent hearthstone to the bustle of her own busy farm and the noisy welcome of her husband.

Stephen took the refusal very proudly, but the idea had now become paramount, and Joseph Hawick's refusal had only made him the more determined to carry out the project. He had a fierce struggle with his pride and his independence, but the next day he went into Kendal and made arrangements to raise the money by a mortgage on the farm that had been unencumbered for six hundred years.

In a few weeks all arrangements had been made, the Moss had been bought, surveyed and divided, and the partners in its drainage went to work. It soon proved itself a drainage of two kinds. After many hundreds of pounds had been spent to very little purpose, more experienced surveyors had to be sent for, and entirely new means and machinery used. Too much had been thrown into the Moss to abandon the project, and yet the constant cry for "money" was fast exhausting the patience and purses of both Squire Thwaites and Stephen Gray.

The former, more able to bear his loss, became, after two years' labor, quite indifferent, talked of the affair as hopeless, and was half angry at Stephen

for persisting. But something like desperation animated the young farmer, for he had so far mortgaged his home and estate that their redemption was hopeless if the Moss failed him.

Poor Maggie, with two little babies to care for, strove to help him by taking upon herself labors she was totally unfit for; and she rapidly broke down between the unusual physical strain and the constant, anxious worry regarding Stephen. For all her husband's life dwindled down to those damp, black acres of rich mud. Maggie got to hate the name and shudder at the sight of Druid's Moss, and with that touch of superstition always lingering in North-country minds, she half-feared it had bewitched him; for he worked there through long days, until he came home too weary to speak to her or even notice the children; while every pound he could get was hopelessly sunk in its treacherous depths.

It was pitiful, too, to see the bare uplands of the farm that were once white with mountain-sheep; and the great barns and byres nearly empty, that had once been full of Normandy farm horses and dewy-lipped Alderneys. But things got worse and worse, and in the middle of a dreary winter, just before the birth of her third child, Uncle Joseph died. Fifty pounds to defray his funeral expenses was nearly all the money found, but he left Maggie his house and furniture, and with his last breath reminded her of the old Bible:

"You'll be needing it soon, Maggie, dear, I know; don't forget me when you come to that day."

These were his last words, and Maggie pondered them that evening as she sat silent beside her sleeping children.

It was hard to sell the dear old home, but Stephen would hear of nothing else; so the doctor's house went into the market; the quaint furniture was scattered all over the dale, and the money went into Druid's Moss.

It only put off the evil day. Squire Thwaites abandoned his improvements; "he would throw no more good money after bad," he said; but Stephen, with a determination that many thought a kind of madness, worked away.

And really, in the fourth year, it looked as if he would succeed; a portion that had been finished produced such a crop as made the farmers round the craggy hills doubt their own eyes. Stephen was jubilant; what could be done for two acres could be done for two hundred. He had proved his position, and was more enthusiastic than ever over his idea.

But Maggie was almost hopeless. She was beginning to suffer for very necessities; strange, hard men came with authority about her home, and Stephen looked so ill and haggard and was so irritable that her cup was full of sorrow. One gloomy afternoon, when it rained so heavily that work was impossible, she ventured to try and reason with and comfort the gloomy man, looking dolefully across the empty farm-yard towards the great, flat, dreary Moss.

"It will soon be over, my poor Maggie," he said; "to-morrow I am going into Kendal to get another

five hundred pounds, *if I can*, upon the farm plenishing and the remnant of the stock. I am sure, if I get it, to put the whole Moss under wheat this year, and that will practically save us; if I don't, I have lost my estate and all these years' labor, and we shall leave this place beggars within a month. You know the worst now, Maggie."

The next day, amid the driving storm, she watched her husband make his last desperate effort. She turned and looked upon the pleasant room with her three children playing unconsciously about it; then she fled upstairs, and falling down upon her knees, poured out all her heart in passionate, pleading prayer. As she rose with streaming eyes, Uncle Joseph's last words flashed across her mind. Somehow they held a new meaning for her; she unlocked her drawer and lifted the old brass-bound book carefully and tenderly out.

"It has comforted my fathers and mothers for many a generation," she said softly, "I will see what it will do for me;" and she unclasped it with a prayer: "I was brought low and He helped me."

They were good words, and she read the whole psalm through and turned the leaf—a Bank of England bill for £100 fell at her feet. She lifted it as though it had fallen from heaven, and commenced to turn with eager, trembling fingers the well-worn pages. One after another bill fluttered into her lap, until from between the boards of Uncle Joseph's wedding gift she had taken eight thousand eight hundred pounds.

Can any one guess how she prayed again, and with

what a radiant face she met the cross, wretched man that, half-drowned with the storm, walked about sundown up to the hearthstone?"

"Stephen! Stephen!" she cried, joyously, "never look sad again! Uncle Joseph's wedding gift has saved us!" and she spread the money before him.

Maggie was right; the money saved Stephen every way. He bought Thwaites out, he paid off all claims on his home, he re-stocked his farm, and triumphantly finished the draining of Druid's Moss.

To-day, among the craggy, barren miles of Winsleydale, there is a glorious stretch of wheat-fields and meadow pastures, and many a traveller wonders at the bright and fruitful oasis in the barren country; then some countryman will say: "It was aince the devil's own acres, sir, and men and sheep past counting lost their lives in its bogs; but Stephen Gray, wi' sair labor and mair gold, drained the ill land, and he and his hae grown rich on its outcome; though folk do say as he found a crock o' gold there one lucky day."

Maggie's fortune was oddly given, but the eccentric old man did not judge far amiss. His wedding gift was blessed as he intended it should be—in two ways—for Maggie and Stephen learned to love it, not only for the material help it had brought them in their extremity, but also for the promise of the far more exceeding and abundant riches which it promises and provides for.

"I MEANT NO HARM."

"What is this thing that I hear Annie call 'flirtation,' Marie? It really seems to me you ought to put a stop to it. I think it is unwomanly—*and worse!*"

"Nonsense, Cassy! Annie means no harm. All young people 'flirt' now-a-days. It is only a little make-believe; it may come to something, it may come to nothing. It isn't as easy to marry girls as it was when you were young. They have got to take some risks now."

"I do not believe it. True love is the same to-day that it was six thousand years ago. Besides, Annie has one honest lover. Robert Walcott needed no preliminary 'flirtation,' and I don't believe that he would approve of these street admirers Annie smiles upon."

Just here Annie entered, her brown silk and seal-skins setting off admirably the clearly-cut, delicately tinted North American face. She was a bright, lovely girl, full of a healthy animal life, but also

blest, or curst, with those dreamy, introspective eyes which generally indicate a love for sentimental romance."

"Where are you going, Annie?"

"To the *matinée*. '*Somebody*' sent me a ticket and '*Somebody*' will be sure to have the next chair, so I am in for a good time."

"Somebody ought to have come for you. Young ladies, especially engaged young ladies, ought not to make appointments, even for the opera."

"Oh, you dear, old-fashioned auntie! How could Somebody come when I told him not? And as for being engaged, what good is Robert away in New Orleans? Good-by!"

Mrs. Martyn looked anxiously after her daughter, but Annie's smile re-assured her, and she went back to her sewing-room, reflecting that Annie was really no worse than other girls, and that she certainly meant no harm. But this "Somebody" troubled her all afternoon, and she determined to have a chat with Annie as soon as possible about him. Meanwhile, Annie had arrived at the academy, and found, as she anticipated, Somebody waiting for her. Any woman of experience would have trembled for the young girl under the influence of those cruel, luminous eyes, and that cold, handsome face.

This afternoon he was particularly charming, and when they parted at the street corner near Annie's home, she left in the handsome unknown's keeping a great deal that she had already promised to a far better man. She was so distraught and full of thought all the evening, that Mrs. Martyn could not

avoid noticing it, and when Annie went to her own room she followed her there, determined to have the affair out.

"Annie," she said, "sit down a little; I want to tell you that I do not like this affair at the opera. Robert is a very peculiar young man; do you think he would like this Mr.—Mr.—"

"Gonzales, mamma."

"This Mr. Gonzales's attentions to you?"

"Of course he would not. But he knows nothing about Paul Gonzales, thank goodness!"

"I would not go any more with him; I have an unhappy feeling about it."

But Annie was rebellious, and Mrs. Martyn spoke to her husband, and he stayed five minutes from his business next morning to say some very plain words to Annie. They were unwise words, unwisely spoken, and only changed the open "flirtation" into a secret intrigue.

Aunt Cassy watched the girl anxiously. Though an old maid, she had had her own little tragedy, and she longed to get Annie's confidence, and help her over the dangerous ground dividing girlhood and wifehood. But Annie resented all interference with her real love affair, and treated her engagement with Robert with a freedom equally pitiful in her aunt's eyes. She wrote to him a regular number of letters each week, and went listlessly on with her wedding garments.

Towards the end of February, two or three days of passion and weeping revealed the fact that Paul Gonzales had gone away. But he did not suffer his

influence over Annie to drop, and his letters, full of extravagant sentiment, kept her in a constant fever of excitement. Mamma hoped now, as Robert was daily expected, that Annie might be safely married before Gonzales returned to New York, and preparations for the event were hurried with all the energy she possessed.

But at once a new anxiety arose. Robert stopped writing. Annie laughed at first, and supposed he was on the road home; but a week passed, and he neither came nor wrote. Then one afternoon, as she strolled down Broadway, she suddenly met him face to face. He tried to avoid her and would have passed on.

"Robert!"

"Miss Martyn."

"What do you mean, Robert?"

"I intended to call this evening and tell you. I only arrived an hour ago. You will excuse me; I have not seen my mother and sister yet. Good afternoon."

She returned his stately bow with one equally cold and self-possessed, called a carriage, rode home, and then went to Aunt Cassie with her whole trouble.

"You have brewed the cup, Annie, and you will have it to drink, I am afraid. Do it as bravely as you can."

In the evening Robert Walcott came, as he promised, but instead of asking for Annie, he requested to see Mr. and Mrs. Martyn. There was a tearful and rather stormy conference, and then she heard

him leave the house without a word or message to her. Her father followed him in a very angry mood, and Mrs. Martyn, flushed and tearful, met her daughter with a reproach.

"I hope you are satisfied, Annie! Robert has unconditionally refused to fulfill his engagement. He says he would rather die than marry you."

"The sentiment is mutual. Why did you not tell him so?"

"No use putting on airs of that kind, Miss. You know you intended to marry him if he had not found you out."

"I don't know any such thing. I think it very likely I should have found grace to be honest at the last moment. I am glad it is all over. I was marrying Robert Walcott to please you and papa, not myself, by any means. I hope he knows about Paul."

"Of course. Paul is his complaint."

"Oh, it is! I wonder now who told him?"

"Mr. Gonzales himself told him."

"Impossible!"

"He said so."

Annie was silent a moment, and then laughed—not a pleasant laugh.

"Where did they meet?"

"At the Carnival in New Orleans. He says there was a great crowd at the hotel, and he was asked to allow a stranger part of his room the night of the Rex's ball. The stranger was Paul Gonzales. They sat talking about New York until they went to the ball; and after it, they sat down, naturally enough, to discuss the dancing and the ladies. Robert spoke

warmly in praise of the peculiar beauty of Southern women, and Paul answered 'that his little Yankee Annie was worth a million of them.' Then, being much excited with wine, Robert easily led him on not only to show your picture but your letters to him."

"Well, I am glad of that. My lord knows, then, that his desertion will not kill me. No use fretting, mamma."

"What will people say?"

"Oh, we shall have the wedding as proposed, only we will change bridegrooms. Paul will gladly take Robert's place."

"I should think so! Do you know what he is? Robert says—a professional gambler! He made inquiries about him, and watched him. He thought it his duty to tell us."

"That is just like Robert. Dog in the manger! Don't want me himself, and would hate Paul to have me also. Go on with the wedding things, mamma. I shall marry Paul."

But Mr. Martyn made some inquiries which put a marriage with Paul, in his opinion, quite out of the question. The man was well known to the police as a clever and dangerous gambler, and lived by his wits. Annie was peremptorily forbidden to see him, write to him, or even think of him again.

A month afterwards she was missing, and it was found that she had been married to Paul Gonzales, and gone to Europe with him. The wretched father made what was, perhaps, the best possible use of the misfortune. He took his daughters Lizzie

and Jennie apart, and, in the most solemn and emphatic manner, told them of their sister's ruin, and how it had been all the result of a flirtation begun in idleness and vanity, and with the conviction that no harm was meant on either side.

For twenty months no one heard anything of Annie Gonzales. Then Aunt Cassy got a letter. "She had had a little girl, and had named it Cassy, and she was sick of German baths, and longed to see papa and mamma, and home, and dear, dear New York." But Aunt Cassy had little comfort to give the poor girl. Mr. and Mrs. Martyn could not forgive her desertion, and did not desire to see her—unless she would leave her disreputable husband.

That Annie would not do—no, though he had begun to weary of her, and to find both his wife and sickly little baby a great encumbrance. It was some comfort to her, however, that in the third year of their marriage he came back to America, and settled himself in Galveston, Texas. And whatever comfort she found in it, she soon began sorely to need. She had another child, and with this additional care came the bitterest trials of a gambler's wife. Her aristocratic husband became very poor. She had hardly any clothing left, and her board-bill was so much in arrear that she dismissed the little negro girl who helped her nurse, and with inferior food, poor lodging, and exhausting climate, lifted day by day a still increasing burden.

Paul stood poverty in all respects badly. His handsome face had a reckless look, and with the gradual decay of his toilet, his manners had kept

pace. Things had gone badly with him for four years, and he showed it. No one could now have looked in his face and doubted his occupation. Gradually, too, he assumed the swagger and bluster of the professional gambler—he was indeed obliged to—but people may act a part until they feel it, and Annie soon found that cold looks and sneering words were not the worst that could befall her.

It was their fifth wedding-day, and it had been five years of restless misery. Annie was sitting nursing her baby, and thinking of the folly that had wrecked her life, when she heard a shuffling noise and a confused talking on the stairs. She vaguely wondered about it, but did not turn her head until the confusion was at her door, and in her room. Then she rose to face it—her husband stretched upon a shutter, stabbed to the heart, and dead.

"Thar warn't no one to blame but himself, marm. He war playing with Mustang Dick, and did a thing or two none of us 'ull stand—least of all Mustang. Very sorry for you, marm, all the same."

That was the end of it. Annie sold her last few trinkets to bury him, and then wrote a humble pitiful letter to her parents. Her father answered it by coming to Galveston for her and the children. It was no happy home-coming. I doubt if the black sheep is ever loved as people say—we love best those children who do us credit, or bring us wealth; and Annie had brought nothing but shame and annoyance to the Martyn household.

Beside her gay young sisters, she was a dark shadow; very few of her old friends remembered

her, still fewer asked her out. Her children were not pretty, and they were fretful and mischievous, and Annie felt keenly enough that there were two —perhaps three—too many in the home where she had once queened it so happily.

She went out one day to do some shopping for her mother, and came home so white, and haggard, and wretched looking, that for once her condition attracted attention, and she was advised to go and rest. But both her children were crying, and she knew everybody was tired of them—it would not do to rest yet. She lifted them almost angrily, and went upstairs, and Aunt Cassy followed her.

When they reached her own cozy, bright room, she said :

"Annie, come in here—I want to speak to you, dear."

The tone and words were so sympathetic that the poor, weary girl could have cried. She lifted her eyes wonderingly, gave the troublesome Cassy something to play with, and tried to pacify the restless Paul at her own breast.

"Oh, auntie, how bright and peaceful this room is; it is good to rest a few minutes here."

"Annie, I have watched you closely the last year. I don't love you the less for it. What fresh trouble have you had to-day? I am your friend, Annie."

"I saw Robert Walcott."

"Did he speak ?"

"No. I don't believe he knew me until I had passed. He had a lovely girl with him ; they got into a handsome carriage together."

"It was his wife."

"Whom did he marry?"

"Grace Loring. She had a large fortune."

"Ah!"

Annie sat looking down so hopelessly that Aunt Cassy could no longer refrain herself.

"Annie," she said, "I have had for some little time, a project that I want you to join me in."

"What is it, aunt?"

"I want to go to the country and have a home of my own. I want to have beautiful gardens, and large, cool, handsome rooms. I want to see you happy and merry again, and do some good with my money before I die. Shall we go?"

"Oh, aunt, aunt! If you would! If you would!"

"Well, we will. I get precious little happiness out of my money as it lies in the East River Bank. I have been thinking of this country project for some weeks; and last week, when cook struck little Cassy, and no one would correct her for it, I determined upon it. Cassy isn't pretty yet, and she is bad, but I am not going to have her struck or put upon any longer. She is my namesake, you know."

It rather astonished the Martyn household when Aunt Cassy announced her purchase of a lovely place in the country, when she refurnished it throughout splendidly, bought a phaeton and a pair of ponies, and carried Annie and her babies away with her. I think she got her reward. For though it was an unprecedented effort for Miss Cassy to break up the routine of a quarter of a century and suddenly assume the responsibilities of a house-

holder, she gained immeasurably by it. Life became a different thing to her, and she found that even at fifty years of age one has yet much left to do and enjoy.

Nay, she took to investing and making money, and Annie, as her prospective heiress, soon found herself in a very different social position. But I dare not say that she had now got over her troubles; her children caused her much care and anxiety. Men don't "gather figs of thorns or grapes of thistles," and there were in them queer moral lapses and lacks that people who did not know their father found it hard to account for.

Once, after a very hard experience, she said:

"Oh, auntie! to think of all this sorrow from one little bit of flirtation! When I began it I meant no harm."

"Annie, whatever a girl does secretly is better undone. I like the English sentiment which says: '*A girl should be wooed on her father's hearthstone.*' Your wooing was all wrong; it was the first step on a bad road; but even a bad road may have a turning, and thank God! Annie, you and the children have taken it."

And this much Annie does: if ever she hears a young girl boasting of her "flirtations," she tries with all a mother's eloquence to turn her off so dangerous a road.

THE HERO OF SALTHAM PIT.

Every one that knows anything about coal mines knows that the great Saltham pit lies just on the edge of the city of Whitehaven, and extends thence far under the sea. In the summer of 18—, two ladies came to Whitehaven for the purpose of establishing their right to shares in this pit—a right which they had recently discovered. They were a mother and daughter, both of them beautiful and cultured women ; and as they had brought letters of introduction to the rector, they were soon recognized as belonging to one of the most desirable "sets" of that old aristocratic city.

Indeed, Mary Allonby was a universal favorite, and before the first winter was over, it was generally understood that she was the promised wife of the handsome Gerald Peel, a young man of very good family, and of great promise. He was the head *Viewer* of the Saltham pit, and knew well the richness and excellence of its coal seams. Now, the *Viewer* of a large English coal mine is a gentleman, a man of great courage, forethought, and fine

engineering skill. He has a large salary, lives in good style and good society, and exercises a great power, not only over the under-viewers, but also in the entire management of the pit.

The marriage had been fixed for June, and the preparations were all made. Mrs. Allonby was so certain of her rights being settled by that date, that she had instructed her lawyer to make over a certain portion of them to her daughter as a wedding present. One evening Gerald was taking tea with them, and from the pleasant room happy laughter and happy voices went floating outward into the shady depths of the shrubbery.

Among this shrubbery a man was lurking—a man with dirty, ragged clothing, and a face passion-smitten and every way evil, and whenever Mrs. Allonby's voice, or Mary's laugh, caught his ear, its expression was almost terrible.

"I'm nothing to them now," he muttered; "but we shall see—we shall see."

He lingered in the thick shrubbery until the moon rose, and he saw Gerald wrap Mary in her little white down hood and cloak, and take her into the garden. Then he crept nearer the house, and watched Mrs. Allonby lift a candle and go upstairs into a room that fronted two ways, one of them toward a gable which was thickly matted with an old ivy vine. The windows were open on that side, and he cautiously ascended. When he reached the upper floor Mrs. Allonby was sitting before an old-fashioned secretary, tying up some papers. He put his hand

upon her shoulder, forced her to sit still, and uttered but one word :

"*Louisa!*"

She did not faint, nor scream, nor even attempt to rise ; but gathering rapidly together all her senses and energies, she looked the man earnestly in the face, and said in a voice where tenderness and anger strove for the mastery :

"*Richard Allonby!*"

"Yes, ma'am. Lock your door and shut your windows. I have something to say to you."

"Not here, Richard ! Not here, for Mary's sake!"

"Why not ? Am I not your husband ? Ah ! ah ! You can't get over that, you see !"

"God help me ! No."

She rose mechanically, locked the door, shut out the sweet evening air, pulled down the blinds, and then, motioning toward a sofa, sat down.

"Oh, no, my lady ! I won't put you to that degradation. You are a lady, you know ;" and then in a lower voice : "And now I want you to give me those Saltham papers. I know all about them."

"Richard, you have robbed me of my own fortune, and of the peace and love of my youth. You killed my father with the shame you brought on him. You have forced me to leave the place where my family have dwelt for centuries, and to come a stranger to this strange north country. Do have pity now on me, and on your own child. For Heaven's sake, spare her the disgrace and misery of knowing you."

"You never told her, then ?"

"No, no, no! She thinks you dead—and, oh, Richard! she is going to be married."

"I know that too. Give me the papers. I have been long enough here."

"Richard! Richard! kill me if you like, but do Mary no further wrong."

"I don't like to kill you, Louisa. I like you well enought to wish to look at you occasionally. Give me the papers, or I shall ring the bell and order my supper. You know I'm master here, if I say so. See, I'll give you five minutes to decide. I don't want you to say I forced them from you."

In great emergencies the mind acts rapidly. Mrs. Allonby reviewed her whole position, and made her decision. She walked back to the secretary, and taking from a drawer a bundle of papers, and a little gold chain holding a pearl cross and a couple of rings, came toward her husband:

"This is to be our last meeting, Richard, and you must promise it upon that chain and those rings; you know them—they are your mothers."

Richard Allonby put them aside nervously. If there was any memory that made his soul shiver and sob, it was that of the gentle little mother whose heart he had broken.

"I won't touch those things," he said; "give me the papers."

"Not unless you do what I say."

Richard saw his wife's courage rising, and he knew well that when timid women are angered to a point of resistance, such anger is not to be defied; so he said, sullenly·

"I will do as you wish."

He took the papers and immediately departed. He had another interview on hand that night. He waited until he saw Gerald enter his own handsome dwelling, then he scaled the great, brick walls, and watched his further movements. He went, as Richard expected, to his office, looked over the reports of the under-viewers, and then lit a cigar and sat down to smoke. There was a low, open window, opening on a stone balcony, and when Gerald rose for something he wanted, Richard boldly entered the room, and was standing before his chair when he turned to it.

Gerald's first thought was, "There is something wrong at the pit," and he said, impatiently:

"Now, my man, what's wrong?"

"I am not your man, Gerald Peel. I propose, indeed, to be your father-in-law."

Then Gerald knew that he had either to deal with a lunatic or a great sorrow, and he closed the window and said:

"Sit down, sir, and say what you have got to say."

Richard did not spare himself. He told all: How he had killed his mother, and ruined his wife, forged his friend's name, and been forgiven, and then robbed the bank and been transported for fourteen years for it. He said he had come back to England eighteen months ago, but had only just found his wife. Didn't want to make trouble, "especially as Mary was going to marry so well, and thought Gerald had better give him some money and let him go to America."

Gerald heard all in silence, then taking out his purse counted out twenty pounds.

"Will that pay you to hold your tongue?"

"Make it fifty."

Gerald made it fifty, and said:

"Now go. If you really go to America, you may write every year for the same; but don't annoy your wife and daughter. Let me stand between them and you."

The calm unselfishness and the air of authority which was partly natural to Gerald and partly acquired by the necessity of his position, quite cowed the wretched man. He slunk out into the darkness; and Gerald thought out the new aspect of his position. "He must hurry forward his marriage. Mary was nothing to blame; but if his family knew, there would be no end of trouble. And these poor women! Surely they needed his protection, with this villain dogging their footsteps."

The next morning he received another heavy blow. Mrs. Allonby told him that her secretary had been robbed of her Saltham papers and some jewelry, and that the police had been notified. He saw at once how the affair lay. He knew who was the thief, and he suspected Mrs. Allonby knew also. But he had determined not to blame her too much. He estimated the horror of her position, and boldly faced the disappointment that had fallen on all the glory of his love. But, at any rate, Mary was the same, and it was Mary he was going to marry. He made some excuse for hurrying forward matters, and in spite of the suggestions of his friends that

the missing papers ought to be found first, he married Mary Allonby early in June.

Perhaps no wife was ever happier. As the years went by, and lovely boys and girls began to patter about the halls and gardens of Peel Place, and as she herself grew in wifely grace, and in her husband's love, she acknowledged continually the blessing of her lot. Only one thing troubled her—her mother's health. Though in the prime of life, she was gradually sinking under a nervous complaint that defied medical skill. Gerald, who guessed the cause, tried often to win her confidence, but she repelled all his advances.

Thus more than five years passed away. One night, about New Year's, the rector was sitting among his household, full of the joy and spirit of the time. Suddenly he was called away from them, and found waiting for him a lady in the wildest terror and distress, whom he easily recognized as Mrs. Allonby.

"Oh, sir!" she cried, "there is no time for words—come with me instantly to Saltham pit! I will explain all as we go."

There is something so compelling in a great sorrow, that he cloaked himself silently and followed her into a waiting carriage. As it drove through the narrow, black streets, she told him the outlines of her sad story.

"And this villain, who has been torturing you to death for five years, is, you say—"

"Is my husband, and he is lying, dying in the pit. A large mass of coal fell on him this afternoon, and

he can't be moved. What could I do?" she cried, pitifully. "How could I tell Gerald and Mary of the horror of such a connection? Oh, my friend, some one must speak to him—some one must pray with him—and I must see the end of him, but I dare not go alone."

Indeed, even the rector turned sick and giddy when he saw the road they must take. The shaft of Saltham is close to the sea, absolutely on the shingle, and nearly nine hundred feet deep. The banksman expressed no surprise at such visitors, and as they refused to change their clothing, gave them each a large overall, and putting them into the huge basket, let them down. The night relays were coming up, and a basket of five men, their candles gleaming in the dark abyss, passed them on the way.

In a few minutes they touched the ground, and a craggy, dark, uneven descent led them to the interior of the pit. The path was high enough to allow them to follow their guide in an upright position. After going one thousand yards in a straight line under the sea, they came to a little opening, where the dying man lay. The space was narrow and hot, and dimly lit by a bit of candle stuck against the coal wall in a piece of clay; and there were some men yet at work about him.

He was almost dead, but his eyes gleamed gratefully upon the miserable, weeping wife, who had at last braved all to come and close his eyes. And, incredible as it may seem, at this hour Louisa Allonby forgot all else but her early love for this

wreck of humanity, and wiped the death-damp from his brow with loving hands, and whispered words of forgiveness and tenderness.

Richard was gentle enough now. In those few hours of agony he learnt more than all his wild life had taught him. Humble and penitent, he listened eagerly to the last prayer he was ever to hear, and then whispered :

" Wife—wife, forgive me—don't tell Mary—the papers are in my breast."

What more he said was between God and his own soul, and Death gradually composed the once handsome face into such solemn curves and such sharp-cut lines as if they were to last forever.

At length poor Louise rose, and the rector was about to lead her away, when one of the men who had been busy trying to the last to relieve the poor miner, stepped forward and said gently :

" Mother, I am here too."

Yes, it was Gerald Peel ; he had been notified at once of the accident, and none had worked harder for the relief of the sufferer. But he went home with the rector and Mrs. Allonby now, and the talk he had with her did for her what no physician could have done. She learnt that Gerald had not only married Mary with a full knowledge of all, but that he had been bribing the man and watching continually his movements, in order to prevent his annoying Mary or her mother.

" It has been a dreadful watch," he said, wearily and solemnly ; " but a little confidence on your

part, mother, might have saved us both much suffering."

And for answer she put the Saltham papers in his hands, and said :

" They are well yours. I never want to see them again, Gerald. You have been very good to me."

Those men were heroes who stormed the Malakoff and lit their cigars in the trenches before Vicksburg, but private life has heroes quite as great, and I think that Gerald Peel's five-years' patience, prudence, and unselfish burden-bearing may make him the brother-knight even of the peerless Bayard.

ONLY JONES.

The officers of her Majesty's Twenty-fourth and Eighty-fourth infantry, were sitting round their mess-table, in Castletown, the capital of the Isle of Man, one evening, more than thirty years ago—that is, all of them except one; but then, that one was only Jones. Nobody minded Jones; even his peculiarities had begun to be an old subject for "chaffing;" and, indeed, he had paid such small attention to their "chaffing" that they had come to find it little pleasure, and after some weeks of discomfort, Lieutenant Jones had been allowed to choose his own pleasures without much interference.

These were not extravagant. A favorite book, a long walk in all kinds of weather, and a sail when the weather was favorable. He would not drink—he said it hurt his health; he would not shoot—he said it hurt his feelings; he would not gamble—he said it hurt his conscience; and he did not care to flirt or visit the belles of the capital—he said it hurt

his affections. Once Captain De Reuzy lispingly wondered whether it was possible to "hurt his honor," and Jones calmly answered, that "it was not possible for Captain De Reuzy to do so."

Indeed, Jones constantly violated all these gentlemen's ideas of proper behavior, but for some reason or other, no one brought him to account for it. It was easier to shrug their shoulders and call him "queer," or say, "it was only Jones," or even to quietly assert his cowardice.

One evening, Colonel Underwood was discussing a hunting party for the next day. Jones walked into the room, and was immediately accosted:

"Something new, Lieutenant. I find there are plenty of hares on the island, and we mean to give puss a run to-morrow. I have heard you are a good rider. Will you join us?"

"You must excuse me, Colonel; such a thing is neither in my way of duty, or my pleasure."

"You forget the honor the colonel does you, Jones," said young Ensign Powell.

"I thank the colonel for his courtesy, but I can see no good reason for accepting it. I am sure my horse will not approve of it; and I am sure the hare will not like it; and I am not a good rider; therefore I should not enjoy it."

"You need not be afraid," said the colonel, rather sneeringly; "the country is quite open, and these low Manx walls are easily taken."

"Excuse me, Colonel. I am afraid. If I should be hurt, it would cause my mother and sisters very

great alarm and anxiety. I am very much afraid of doing this."

What was to be done with a man so obtuse regarding conventionalities, and who boldly asserted his cowardice. The colonel turned away, half contemptuously, and Ensign Powell took Jones's place.

The morning proved to be a very bad one, with the prospect of a rising storm; and as the party gathered in the barracks-yard, Jones said earnestly to his colonel:

"I am afraid, sir, you will meet with a severe storm."

"I think so, Lieutenant, but we promised to dine at Gwynne Hall, and we shall get that far, at any rate."

So they rode rather gloomily away in the rain. Jones attended to the military duties assigned him, and then, about noon, walked seaward. It was hard work by this time to keep his footing on the narrow quay; but amid the blinding spray and mist, he saw quite a crowd of men going rapidly toward the great shelving Scarlet Rocks, a mile beyond the town. He stopped an old sailor and asked:

"Is anything wrong?"

"A little steamer, sir, off ta Calf of Man; she is driving this way; an' inteet, I fear she will be on ta rocks afore ta night."

Jones stood still a moment, and then followed the crowd as fast as the storm would let him. When he joined them, they were gathered on the summit of a huge cliff, watching the doomed craft. She was now within sight, and it was evident that her sea-

men had almost lost all control over her. She must, ere long, be flung by the waves upon the jagged and frightful rocks toward which she was driving. In the lulls of the wind, not only the booming of the minute-gun, but also the shouts of the imperiled crew could be heard.

"What can be done?" said Jones, to an old man, whose face betrayed the strongest emotion.

"Nothing, sir, I am afrait. If she had managed to rount ta rocks, she would have gone to pieces on ta sand, and there are plenty of men who would have risket life to save life. But how are we to reach them from this height?"

"How far are we above water?"

"This rock goes down like a wall, forty fathoms, sir."

"What depth of water at the foot?"

"Thirty feet or more."

"Good. Have you plenty of light, strong rope?"

"Much as you want, sir; but let me tell you, sir, you can't live three minutes down there; ta first wave will throw you on ta rocks, and dash you to pieces. Plenty of us would put you down, sir, but you can't swim if you get down."

"Do you know, old man, what 'surf swimming' is? I have dived through the surf at Nukuheva."

"God bless you, sir! I thought no white man could do that same."

While this conversation was going on, Jones was divesting himself of all superfluous clothing, and cutting out the sleeves of his heavy pea-jacket with

his pocket-knife. This done he passed some light, strong rope through them.

The men watched him with eager interest, and seeing their inquisitive looks, he said :

"The thick sleeves will prevent the rope cutting my body, you see."

"Ay, ay, sir, I see now what you are doing."

"Now men, I have only one request: *Give me plenty of rope as fast as I draw on you.* When I get on board, you know how to make a cradle, I suppose ?"

"Ay, ay, sir ; but how are you going to reach the water ?"

"I am going to plunge down. I have dived from the main yard of the *Ajax* before this. It was as high a leap."

He passed a double coil of the rope round his waist, examined it thoroughly to see that there was plenty to start with, and saying, "now, friends, stand out of the way, and let me have a clear start," he raised his bare head one moment toward heaven, and taking a short run leaped, as from the spring-board of a plunge bath.

Such an anxious crowd as followed that leap ! Great numbers, in spite of the dangerous wind, lay flat on their breasts and watched him. He struck the water at least twenty-five feet beyond the cliff, and disappeared in its dark, foamy depths.

When he rose to the surface, he saw just before him a gigantic wave, but he had time to breathe, and before it reached him he dived below its centre. It broke in passionate fury upon the rocks,

but Jones rose far beyond it. A mighty cheer from the men on shore reached him, and he now began in good earnest to put his Pacific experiences into practice.

Drawing continually on the men for more rope—which they paid out with deafening cheers—he met wave after wave in the same manner, diving under them like an otter, and getting nearer to the wreck with every wave ; really advancing, however, more below the water than above it.

Suddenly, the despairing men on board heard a clear, hopeful voice :

" Help at hand, Captain ! Throw me a buoy !"

And in another minute or two, Jones was on the deck, and the cheers of the little steamer were echoed by the cheers of the crowd on the land. There was not a moment to be lost ; she was breaking up fast ; but it took but a few minutes to fasten a strong cable to the small rope and draw it on board, and then a second cable, and the communication was complete.

" There is a lady here, sir," said the captain. " We must rig up a chair for her ; she can never walk that dangerous road."

" But we have not a moment to waste, or we may all be lost. Is she very heavy ?"

" A slight little thing ; half a child, sir."

" Bring her here."

This was no time for ceremony ; without a word, save a few sentences of direction and encouragement, he took her under his left arm, and steadying himself by the upper cable, walked on the lower

with his burden safely to the shore. The crew rapidly followed, for in such moments of extremity the soul masters the body, and all things become possible.

There was plenty of help waiting for the half dead seamen ; and the lady, her father, and the captain, had been put in the carriage of Braddon, of Braddon, and driven rapidly to his hospitable Hall. Jones, amid the confusion, disappeared ; he had picked up an oil-skin coat and cap, and when every one turned to thank their deliverer, he was gone. No one knew him ; the sailors said they believed him to be "one of the military gents, by his rigging," but the individuality of the hero had troubled no one until the danger was over. In an hour the steamer was driven on the rocks, and went to pieces ; and, it being by this time quite dark, every one went home.

The next day the hunting-party returned from Gwynne Hall, the storm having compelled them to stop all night, and at dinner that evening the wreck and the hero of it were the theme of every one's conversation.

"Such a plucky fellow," said Ensign Powell. "I wonder who he was. Gwynne says he was a stranger, perhaps one of that crowd staying at the abbey."

"Perhaps," said Captain Marks, "it was Jones."

"Oh, Jones would be too afraid of his mother."

Jones made a little satirical bow, and said pleasantly : "Perhaps it was Powell ;" at which Powell laughed and said, "not if he knew it."

In a week the event had been pretty well exhausted ; especially as there was to be a great dinner and ball at Braddon, and all the officers had invitations. This ball had a peculiar interest, for the young lady who had been saved from the wreck would be present, and rumors of her riches and beauty had been rife for several days. It was said the little steamer was her father's private yacht, and that he was a man of rank and influence.

Jones said he should not go to the dinner, as either he or Saville must remain for evening drill, and that Saville loved a good dinner, while he cared very little about it. Saville could return in time to let him ride over about ten o'clock and see the dancing. Saville rather wondered why Jones did not take his place all the evening, and felt half-injured at his default. But Jones had a curiosity about the girl he had saved. To tell the truth, he was nearer in love with her than he had ever been with any woman, and he wished in calm blood to see if she was as beautiful as his fancy had painted her during those few awful minutes that he had held her high above the waves.

She was exceedingly lovely, just the fresh, innocent girl he had known she would be. He watched her dancing with his brother-officers, or talking to her father, or leaning on Braddon's arm, and every time he saw her she looked fairer and sweeter. Yet he had not courage to ask for an introduction, and in the busy ball-room no one seemed to remember that he needed one. He kept his post against the conservatory door quite undisturbed for some time.

Presently he saw Squire Braddon with the beauty on his arm approaching him. As they passed, the Squire remembered he had not been to dinner, and stopped to say a few courteous words, and introduced his companion.

"Miss Conyers."

"Lieutenant Jones."

But no sooner did Miss Conyers hear Lieutenant Jones's voice, than she gave a joyful cry, and clapping her hands together, said :

"I have found him ! Papa ! Papa ! I have found him !"

Never was there such an interruption to a ball. The company gathered in excited groups, and papa knew the lieutenant's voice, and the captain knew it, and poor Jones, unwillingly enough, had to acknowledge the deed and be made a hero of.

It was wonderful, after this night, what a change took place in Jones's quiet ways. His books and boat seemed to have lost their charm, and as for his walks, they were all in one direction, and ended at Braddon Hall. In about a month Miss Conyers went away, and then Jones began to haunt the postman, and to get pretty little letters which always seemed to take a great deal of answering. Before the end of the winter, he had an invitation to Conyers to spend a month, and a furlough being granted, he started off in great glee for Kent. Jones never returned to the Eighty-fourth. The month's furlough was indefinitely lengthened—in fact he sold out, and entered upon a diplomatic career under the care of Sir Thomas Conyers.

Eighteen months after the wreck, Colonel Underwood read aloud at the mess a description of the marriage of Thomas Jones, of Milford Haven, to Mary, only child and heiress of Sir Thomas Conyers, of Conyers Castle, Kent. And a paragraph below stated that "The Honorable Thomas Jones, with his bride, had gone to Vienna on diplomatic service of great importance."

"Just his luck," said Powell.

"Just his *pluck*," said Underwood; "and for my part, when I come across any of these fellows again that are afraid of hurting their mothers and sisters, and not ashamed to say so, I shall treat him as a hero just waiting for his opportunity. Here is to the Honorable Thomas Jones and his lovely bride! We are going to India, gentlemen, next month, and I am sorry the Eighty-fourth has lost Lieutenant Jones; for I have no doubt whatever, he would have stormed a fort as bravely as he boarded a wreck."

THE "BLUE WESLEY TEA-POT."

Every epoch has its hobby; at present the world devotes itself to pottery. Yesterday I went to see some pieces of rare old china; but I saw no piece among them that interested me half so much as a queer little blue and white tea-pot, that I used to be familiar with in my childhood. I know now that it was one of half-a-dozen that are eagerly sought after, and worth more than gold; but the old lady to whom it belonged only valued it for its associations.

It had been made in Staffordshire when the art of pottery was just emerging from its rudeness, and when the people were as yet half barbarous, and wholly irreligious; and it commemorated the apostolic labors of John Wesley in that almost unknown district. His likeness adorned one side, and a Scriptural motto, often in his mouth, the other. Of course, it had a history—any child could see that—and this is what I am going to tell.

Martha Wheildon was a Staffordshire woman, born in that cold, wet, clayey country which lies

just on the edge of Cannock Chase and the great coal-field of the South. A country ugly beyond all description—a flat, black waste, intersected by foul canals, covered with slow barges laden with coal and iron—short, wide chimneys pouring out smoke and flame—huts and hovels built of mud and brick, and miserable little children playing their dreary play among the cinders and *debris* of the kilns and pits.

Methodism came to these people like the very promise of heaven, and the "pottery district" was in a great measure humanized by its influence. Still the pits and kilns brought wild, bad characters of all kinds to work in them, and thus every little village was often shocked by deeds of desperate wickedness.

One morning, in the year 1833, two young men were busy at their wheels, for they were throwers in the pottery of Michael Colclough. One of them was William Wheildon, and the other John Burslem. They were not relatives, but they had been for many years fellow-workers and friends. However, there had come a shadow between them, and this shadow, as it often is, was a very fair, good girl, only child of Michael Colclough. Both young men were in love with her, and neither of them could be certain that he was the favored one.

Finally, however, Mary Colclough gave her whole heart to William Wheildon; but when the lovers applied to Michael for his sanction, it was refused with scorn and anger. Michael had saved money, and William's mother was a widow with small

means. He greatly preferred John Burslem, whose father had left John two hundred pounds and the cottage where he still lived. And so he told Mary to give up Will, saying :

"I'd turn him off if I could, but he 's hired till New Years. And there's Tom Bagley, he 's got to go ; he 's been a telling Toft's people how I gotten my glaze ; but I 'll be upsides with him."

The old man turned away with an angry exclamation, for a revelation of secret processes in a pottery was no slight wrong, and as all hands are hired by the year, Michael had to pay his unfaithful servant full wages in order to get rid of him.

That very morning on which my tale opens, he came up to where Will and John were at their wheels, and Tom Bagley piling the biscuit in *saggers* for the kiln, and gave the latter his wages and his dismissal. The man was furiously angry and made some dangerous threats. But John Burslem noticed nothing save that Will and Michael had some hard words about Mary, and his jealousy became an unreasonable passion at once, and his dark, sullen face remained unmoved by all Will's explanations.

The next day was Stoke Market, and Michael Colclough, as usual, went over there with his samples and his week's gathered gold. He usually came home about five o'clock, often taking across a little moor to the left of the village in order to shorten the distance. John Burslem also crossed this moor going home from work, and he resolved to wait for Michael there and offer to put his money

in the pottery if Michael would promise him the hand of Mary.

Another workman was with him called Sans, but when they saw Michael in the distance Sans hurried on, and John waited for his approach. In a few mimutes there was the report of a gun, and a man came running toward John Burslem, followed by Sans, who was crying out:

"Hold the murderer, John! I know thee, William Wheildon! Thou hast shot the old man—I seed thee do it."

John looked up, and dusk as it was, he saw distinctly the peculiar coat and hat which Will always wore on Sundays; but when the man approached him, he knew at once that it was Tom Bagley in Will Wheildon's clothes.

The two men looked in each other's faces; there was but a moment to decide, and Tom saw in John's face enough to make him say:

"If thou helps me away, thou are sure then of Mary Colclough. Can I go to thy cottage?"

"There is a cellar underneath it."

That was all that was said, for Sans was rapidly approaching. John ran to meet him, and by the time his eager questions were answered, the murderer was out of sight.

"But never mind," said Sans, "I know well who it was, and thou John saw him too. Come, we had better look to old master."

Michael was not dead, but he was little likely to live, and what chance he had was quite lost by the wild passion to which he gave way when he learned

his critical condition. He positively asserted that William Wheildon was his murderer, and he looked at Mary in such a suspicious way as added greatly to her grief and sorrow.

"Thou would marry my murderer and be fain, Mary," he said bitterly, in low painful gasps.

"Never, never, father! Not to save my life would I marry the man who took yours?"

"Then thou won't wed with Will!"

"If he murdered you, father, never!"

During his last hours Michael sent for John Burslem. He left the pottery in his charge until it could be sold for Mary; and then John doubtless made his offer, for Mary was hastily summoned, and her hand placed in John's almost with her father's latest effort.

In the meantime William Wheildon had been sent to Stoke prison, and evidence against him was so conclusive that no one, except his mother, dared to believe his solemn asseverations of innocence. Michael Colclough and Sans had both positively recognized him, and Will's gun had been found within fifty paces of the murdered man.

Wheildon had left the pottery at four o'clock, and no one but his mother had seen him afterward. She said that her son had drank his tea with her, and then retired to his own room for reading, as was his custom, while she tidied up and got ready for chapel, to which he was going with her.

Martha Wheildon had such a high character that no one believed her capable of lying, even to save her only son; but then every one thought that she

had been deceived in Will's occupation, and that while she supposed him to be reading, he had really gone on his murdering mission. The fact of his having his chapel clothes on, seemed to prove that he had meant to get back and be ready for his mother at the proper time.

The clothes could not be found—of course not. In his helter-skelter flight across the moor they had got torn and soiled with clay, and he had destroyed their evidence.

William's tale went no way to exonerate him. He allowed that he had quarreled with Michael, and said that he would marry his daughter whether he liked it or not, admitted that he had spoken in a way that disgraced him as a good Methodist, but said he was angry at Michael's slurs on his mother. He said further, that after drinking tea with his mother, he had locked himself in his room to prepare for chapel, and that just before time to leave he had discovered that his best clothes had been stolen, but did not miss his gun until it was shown to him after being picked up on Black Moor.

The tale at best was a weak one, and could not stand a moment before old Michael's dying statement, and San's positive assertion. Sans, indeed, had not a good character, but on the stand, John Burslem, having been solemnly sworn, also testified to seeing a man in William Wheildon's clothes running away from the murdered potter, and, being closely questioned, said that the man was "*certainly William Wheildon.*" Many pitied John very much for having to testify against an old friend, and all

noticed his pallid face and trembling hands while he did so.

There was no possible verdict but one, yet the judge was so impressed by both mother and son's calm and dignified behavior that he announced his determination to recommend the prisoner to mercy. This favor at least promised time, and Martha was hopeful and grateful. During all her son's imprisonment, her love and attention to him, and her faith in God's deliverance and Will's innocence, were remarkable. For some reason, satisfactory to herself, she preferred praying in the little chapel, and hour after hour found her kneeling there.

"Go thy ways, Martha Wheildon," said the minister to her one day, "it is impossible the son of such prayers should come to any harm or wrong."

And Martha took the words for her answer, and showed ever afterward to all her friends a cheerful face. It was in these days the little blue tea-pot first became dear to her. Its cheerful motto, "In God we trust," stood above her hearthstone constantly. When night came, and she could not see to read her Bible, for spectacles were not for poor people in those days, she could turn her face to the bright assurance, and in the fitful fire-light it was always sufficiently clear to her.

But time passed away and no deliverance came. John Burslem managed the pottery, and many said that Mary Colclough was soon to be his wife. But one day he went home to his solitary cottage very cross. Mary had spoken that day, not only some very scornful, but some very suspicious words; he

did not like the tone she had taken toward him. He wanted to be alone and think things over, so he sent the old crone who waited on him to the village on some trifling message.

But he had company he little dreamt of. The woman had no sooner gone than Tom Bagley slunk into the room, and bade John get him brandy and food at once. His tone was not to be disputed—he was a desperate man. "The police," he said, "were after him, and John must give him more gold to reach Bristol. He *would* go abroa this time, he swore he would."

"Why did you not go before?" said John, with a sickening heart.

"I went as fur as Lundun, got into bad hands, and am in trouble again."

"Well, get out of it."

"You'll help me to, lad?"

"Not a step."

"Then I'll be took. If I tell, I may swing for it, but you'll go to Botany Bay—hard work—for life. I'd rather hang, for my part—please yoursen."

John was in despair, but he had willingly forged the first link of the devil's chain that bound him; now he must go on, or lose everything. He fed the rascal, disguised him in some of his own clothes, and gave him twenty pounds. At midnight he started him off for Bristol, promising to send him fifty pounds more when he heard that he was safe in America.

Next morning he went to the pottery, but, oh, how sick with anxiety he was. Wheildon in his

prison cell was not half so miserable. Half-a-dozen times he was on the point of throwing down his piece and flying for his life. He determined at any rate to go next day to Stoke, draw all his money from the bank, and arrange his plans for leaving England. "Why should he stop for a puling, scornful girl that hated to look at him? He would never be safe as long as Tom Bagley knew where he was; and his money too—it would never be his own."

When he went home the old woman had a terrible tale to tell. "There had been strange men there, and they had searched the house and taken a bundle out of the cellar."

John uttered a low cry; he knew what was in the bundle—Will Wheildon's Sunday clothes, in which Tom Bagley had committed the murder, and the rags which he had left last night in exchange for one of his own suits.

"How long since they were here?"

"A matter of ten minutes or that 'on."

Then they had gone to meet him. Doubtless they had got a warrant at Stoke for his apprehension. Tom must have been caught—must have confessed all; he had not a moment to lose.

Fortunately it was nearly dark and he knew the country pretty well. He traveled all night over dismal roads made of cinders and bits of broken pottery, and lit by lurid furnaces, never pausing, hardly knowing where he went, only that he was keeping southward. At the close of the second day he came to a wretched little mining village, and stopped at an ale-house to rest. He fancied the

men looked queerly at him, and glancing up he saw a printed description of his person, and a reward of fifty pounds for his apprehension.

He drank his mug of ale and went out into the darkness again ; but he had scarcely got a hundred yards before he was aware that a motley crowd, with lanterns, were following him. He went recklessly forward, though he knew the country here was full of marl pits and open shafts and dangers of many kinds. Twice he fell into chalk quarries, and knowing that his form made a black patch on the white stone, he struggled out full of agony and terror.

But the men in spite of their wanderings and turnings, were rapidly gaining on him. He was desperate with the fear of falling into the hands of such a rude mob, and, in spite of their warning cries, rushed madly forward. There was an open shaft before him, and he plunged headlong into it. As there was a reward for his body dead or alive, the black, cold waters of the old pit were dragged and the poor shattered remains carried back for identification.

All was known now, and rapid measures were at once taken for William Wheildon's release. The first cup of tea that he drank at his own fireside again—a free and justified man, on the eve of his marriage with Mary—his mother brewed in the little "blue Wesley tea-pot," the little tea-pot that had comforted and cheered her in all her trouble, with its pleasant and strong assurance, "In God we trust."

NOT FOR GOLD.

"Janet's fortune! How much is it, mother?" said Ronald Mitchell, as he carefully measured the anchovy for his boiled salmon.

"How much, Ronald? Nothing less than the whole Cross-me-loof estate, besides £10,000 good money in the Bank of Scotland."

"Too little," replied Ronald, shaking his head in a meditate manner. "I could not sell myself so cheap."

"But there is the lassie forbye; she is not bad looking, and she is a carefu' housewife and a good Christian."

"Doubtless, mother, she is better than she's bonnie; but I know a girl worth ever so much more than Janet McDonald."

"That will be Bailie Johnson's daughter?"

"You do me too much honor; I do not aspire to a woman six feet high, especially when her temper is of equal proportions."

"Well, Isabelle *has* a bad temper, but Janet is different: she has no vice, and—"

"No heart."

"She has plenty of money."

"And no intellect."

"But she has interest enough to send you to Parliament."

"I don't want to go there, mother, and I do want my dinner, and you are taking away my appetite." And Ronald drew the moor-cock toward him and helped himself so liberally that Mrs. Mitchell may be excused for altogether doubting the fact. Then there was a few minutes' silence, which did not deceive Ronald; he knew it was the lull before the breaking of the storm. His mother's attitude of indifference and listlessness was all assumed; he was perfectly familiar with it, and knew—for none had better reason to know—what a proud, resolute spirit it hid.

She was only hesitating now to open the subject which lay nearest her heart, because Ronald maintained a neutrality of perfect silence, and she knew that if she began the dispute, she gave him, at the opening of the argument, all the advantages which belong to the defendant.

While she was hesitating, a servant brought in a card and gave it to her.

"It is Wylie, Ronald," she said; "you had better go and see him."

"Why so, mother? I know nothing about the property. You and he have always managed it. Besides, I have an engagement at half-past seven."

"But something must be done. Every year the

rents are decreasing. My income will soon be at starvation point."

Ronald looked up and smiled incredulously.

"Oh, yes. I keep up an appearance, of course, and I suppose I shall always be able to do that, for I am not one of the foolish women who spend as they go. I have laid a little by to help the future; but what is to become of you?"

"Heigh-ho! I have a good angel, I suppose."

"A good wife would be more to the purpose, and if you would only marry Janet McDonald, she would bring you a fine estate; besides, she is a prudent lassie, and would help you to keep the gear well together."

"How do I know that Janet would have me?"

"I have already spoken to her."

"It was throwing words away, mother. If there is anything else I can pleasure you in, I shall be willing and obedient, but I dare not cast my life away—not for gold at least."

"Yet you are going to do it for a pretty face."

"You are mistaken. I have my price, I suppose; but neither land nor beauty are able to buy me."

"The conceit of men is wonderful; it passes the comprehension of women. Where are you going this evening?"

"To Mrs. Sorley's."

"To see Miss Eve. Very well, Ronald. Remember, if you decline to accept Janet McDonald as your wife, I also decline to receive Eve Sorley as my daughter. I suppose the right of rejection is left to me as well as you."

"Not equally, mother. You cannot make Janet my wife; but I, by marrying Eve, can make her your daughter."

"I deny it, sir, for in such a case you would no longer be my son. Good-evening, sir."

"Mrs. Mitchell Victrix as usual," said Ronald, laughing softly to himself, and slowly refilling his glass. "Here is a new turn in affairs. I must go and see what Eve says about it."

On his way there he tried not to think of the subject; it perplexed and annoyed him; but Eve had a way of letting sunlight into everything, and whatever she said, of course he should do. Eve, watching and listening in the shadow of the crimson draperies, heard the echoes of his long, swinging steps, and divined in them something new, even before she saw the strange light in his usual merry eyes.

"What is the matter, Ronald? I do not believe I shall call you 'Sans souci' to-night; you look troubled."

"You may call me the 'Disinherited Knight,' for I think my trouble will amount to that."

"What have you been doing?" said Mrs. Sorley.

"My sin is one of omission, Madame. You see, Mrs. Sorley, I am only a part of the estate to my mother. She wants to invest me profitably, just as she does the interest on her loans and savings. At present she allows me five hundred pounds a year; but if I refuse to carry out her plans, she will withdraw it, I am sure. Then what am I to do?"

"Ask Eve."

Eve met the questioning face with one of confidence.

"Go to work, sir, and make five hundred pounds a year. I will marry you when you can earn three hundred pounds. What do you say to that?"

"That you are the wisest and loveliest and bravest little lady in Christendom;" and he fairly lifted her in his arms and kissed her.

"Put me down, Ronald, and listen to what I say. You are six feet two inches high, and strong as Hercules. You never have a headache, and are just twenty-two years old. 'Disinherited!' Pshaw! Your inheritance is in your own keeping. The world is given to the children of men; go into it, and take your portion."

Nothing strengthens a man in trouble like the sympathy and help of the woman he loves. Ronald went from Eve's presence gifted with a definite purpose and an appointed task. The inward change had its outward evidences. It was perceptible in his firm, rapid tread, which had lost its usual lazy swing, in the manner which he ascended the steps two and three at a time, and in the impetuous way in which he flung hat and gloves on the hall table, and entered his mother's presence. She was half-sitting and half-lying in a large duchess chair, lazily dipping her toast into a glass of mulled wine. But at Ronald's entrance she partly turned her head, and said, in a sleepy manner:

"Your energy is exhausting and unnecessary, Ronald; I wish you would be more gentlemanly."

He tried to obey her, as he had always done, but

he was too excited to-night. Before he got half across the room he stumbled over a small ottoman, and then kicked it out of his way.

"What is the matter with you, sir? What kind of company have you been in to bring such a riotous influence back with you?"

"I have been with two of the noblest women in the world, mother."

"Indeed! I am sure I should never have thought so." And the sneering accent was very perceptible.

"I told you I was going to Mrs. Sorley's, and I have been."

"Very well, sir; that is enough. I am not curious about the family. We will change the subject, please."

The habit of obedience was so strong that he remained silent—if silence that might be called, in which every attitude was eloquent with resistance.

"The two Wilkies were here to-night. They wish you to join a fishing excursion to the Trosachs. I told them I was sure you would go."

"You are mistaken, mother. I shall be better employed, I hope."

Mrs. Mitchell raised he eyes incredulously, but asked:

"How?"

"I am going to try and find some work to do."

"Work!" almost screamed his mother; "and pray, what can you do?"

"Indeed, mother, very little; but I can learn. I have been taught nothing useful; my education is superficial, and no profession has been given me. I

am not even fit for a clerkship. I see nothing before me but manual labor, unless you continue my allowance while I study law or medicine."

"You have begun at the wrong end of your story, sir. Now be pleased to begin your argument properly. What led you to form this resolution?"

"Your remark this evening. You declared that if I married Miss Sorley, I should no longer be your son."

"Quite correct."

"Then, as I am determined to marry Miss Sorley, it becomes necessary for me to consider on some way of supporting her and myself."

"True; for you can hardly expect me to support a young woman I detest. As for continuing your allowance, I shall do no such thing. I will give you a month to reconsider your conduct, and if at the end of it you still prefer this—this—"

"Miss Sorley, mother?"

"This girl, sir, you can take her, and go your own way. That is all I have to say, sir."

But it was easier to determine to work than to find the work to do, and if it had not been for the strengthening influence of Eve, Ronald would perhaps have become discouraged. The month drew to a close, and still no employment had been found.

"What shall I do, Bright Eyes?" said Ronald, one evening. "It seems as if there was no place in the work-a-day world for me."

"Oh, yes, there is, only you have not found it yet. And, do you know, Ronald, mamma and I have been talking of your going to America?"

The suggestion was not new to the young man; his own heart had been giving him the same advice from the very first; and the subject once broached, soon assumed a tangible form. It was thoroughly discussed and arranged for, Ronald's place taken in a steamer leaving two days before his month of grace expired.

During all his trials and preparations, Ronald's home—never a happy one—had been becoming daily more wretched. His mother wearied him with alternate reproaches and entreaties; and his friends pitied or abused, advised or laughed at him. Still, the last night he was to spend under his mother's roof, he made another effort at reconciliation.

"I have a miserable headache to-night," he said. "Kiss me, mother, for the sake of old times."

"Certainly, Ronald, if the kiss implies that you have recovered your senses, and are willing to follow out my plans for your welfare."

"I cannot give up Eve, mother. Forgive me this."

"You are old enough to choose between us. If it is Miss Sorley, her kisses must suffice you."

"At least, mother, shake hands."

"You are sentimental to-night—a thing I have no use in the world for. Obedience is the test of love."

"Well, good-night, mother.'

"Good-night, sir."

And thus they parted, never more to meet in this world.

Hard as his parting was with Eve, it did not

sadden him like the unnatural "Good-night, sir," of his mother. In the former there was love and hope, and the promise of a happy reunion.

After Ronald's departure, Eve waited hopefully and happily for the good news she was sure would come. Nor did she wait in vain. In two years Ronald had completed his study for the law, and opened a small office in a flournishing town in Western New York. For some time his practice was small, but at the end of the fourth year he was making more than enough to claim the redemption of Eve's promise.

Mrs. Sorley accompanied her daughter to America, and lived many happy years with the young couple. Ronald is always a warm defender of that much-abused character, a mother-in-law.

As years wore on, the little vine-covered cottage was added to and enlarged, until it became the pride of the town; and Judge Mitchell's handsome house and gardens, his thoroughbred horses and numerous servants, are certainly evidences of an income vastly above the £500 a year he refused to accept as equivalent for manhood's noblest rights and privileges.

Ronald is a portly middle-aged man now, and Eve, though still beautiful, has lost the early bloom of youth; but up and down the long piazzas, and through the shady arcades of elm and chestnut, many beautiful boys and girls play, walk, or read, uncontrolled by any element but a wise and patient love. For Ronald has still a sad remembrance of a home cheerless and loveless amid all its splendor, of a

childhood, unblessed by fairy lore or mother's kisses, and of a youth in which everything was to have been sacrificed for interest and ambition.

Mrs. Mitchell still lives. If her heart ever softens toward her son, she never suffers it to make any sign. She is apparently as indifferent to his later honors, as she was to his early struggles and trials. It is likely even that she may outlive her busy hard-working son, whose brain and heart carry the cares and sorrows of many besides his own, for

> The good die first,
> And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust
> Burn to the socket."

Yet never has Ronald Mitchell regretted the day in which he chose love before land, and a true wife in preference to £10,000. Ask him to-day if he would part with even one memory of the real life which commenced for him with that decision, and he would answer proudly and confidently, "Not for gold."

ONE PAIR OF GLOVES.

Twenty-three years ago this autumn, a little boat was dropping slowly down the Medway, below the old stone bridge of Maidstone. In it was Ralph Erroll and Bessie Farleigh, and there is small wonder they did not hurry their journey, for to them it was a sail into Loveland. Bessie was beautiful, and the evening was beautiful. The air was redolent with the rich, balmy, bitter odor of hops; far and near were the little camps of the pickers, and drifting in fitful strains over the river the echoes of their song and laughter.

It was not an evening when love needed to plead; he could let his presence blend with all other sweet influences, and trust to the effect. Bessie felt the charm of the sweet gloaming, and the still stronger charm of Ralph's presence. By and by the boat drifted into a cove, and stepping ashore, they were in a park that rose gradually toward an old gray Hall.

"See, Ralph, there are lights in the parlor; we must go home."

"Wait here one minute, Bessie—I have something to ask you. When I have made a little practice in London, will you be my wife? Answer me truly now, like a good, honest girl ought to."

"I will, Ralph."

And when they came in among the old-fashioned flower-beds, they were solemnly pledged to share life's fortune together. For one minute they stood leaning on an old sundial, and in the newly-risen moon everything about Bessie had a strangely witching beauty. Ralph could not help noticing how exceedingly small and shapely was the hand that lay in his, and how dainty and pretty the pearl-colored kid glove that covered it.

When they parted, he said:

"Bessie, this has been a great night for me; give me this glove that I may know to-morrow it was not all a dream."

Bessie laid it in her lover's hand with a smile and a kiss.

"Take it, Ralph," she said, "it is my gage that I will redeem my promise."

Ralph put the delicate little pledge away and went up to London. He had something to work for and hope now, and he soon made these influences tell. Bessie's parents had not objected to the match. Squire Farleigh was the poorest of a long race of Kentish squires, and though the old Hall and lands remained, he had not been a successful farmer, and money was very scarce with him. There seemed

nothing better for Bessie than that she should marry Ralph Erroll, for house and lands must go to her brother Tom, and every year the savings toward her dower had been less and less.

But the very next spring after Bessie's engagement, a speculative neighbor, who had money, proposed to the squire the planting of the rich meadows of Farleigh in hops. Every one knows that the culture of hops is the gambling of agriculture. As it happened, it was a lucky move for Squire Farleigh. It was a new crop to his lands ; the yield was enormous and the rate of duty—on which everything hangs—unusually small. When the picking was over, the hops sold, and profits divided, the squire had £4,000 in the bank.

Everything looked different now. He had found an El Dorado at his own door, and could do nothing but abuse the conventional stupidity which had led him always to plant wheat and oats and feed cattle, simply because the squires before him had always done so.

But he was no better able to bear sudden riches than most men are. He immediately launched into unusual expenses—refurnished the Hall, and rebuilt his kennels, and bought a couple of hunting horses. There was plenty of time for Bessie's dower ; next year's crop would provide for her ; and indeed he had already begun to doubt the wisdom of Bessie's choice. He told himself that she would never live in a close city, and a doctor to him was only associated with scenes of death and misery.

The next year's crop was another success, and

the squire began to build fine *oast-houses* on his land, for he was now determined to have everything necessary to the culture of hops of the very latest and best description. In the meantime the whole family were learning extravagances never thought of in the days of simple farming. Tom Farleigh put no stint to his pleasures, and they were all of an expensive kind, and Bessie had developed equally extensive desires in the way of dress and watering-places. The squire, with all his influx of ready-money, was always in a tight place.

In the second winter of her engagement Bessie went to stay with a new acquaintance in London. As far as Ralph was concerned, it was a very unhappy visit. He loved Bessie with all his heart. Bessie had begun to love many other things besides Ralph. The charms of London society, in all their splendid novelty, captivated her imagination. A life without the Park and the opera, without balls and shopping, seemed like a return to the dark simplicity of Farleigh before the hop days.

Bessie thought she loved Ralph yet, but she did not know her own heart until, one day, Ralph took her to see a little cottage at Richmond, and told her how much his income was, asking her honestly to redeem her pledge to him at once. She was struck with dismay at the apparent narrowing of her life, and positively refused to accede to an immediate marriage.

Indeed, the possibility of breaking it off had now entered her mind, and being once admitted, it made rapid progress, and found plenty of reasons and

excuses for its conduct. Ralph felt the change, but love is always blind where it does not want to see; and one morning, when he read her engagement in the *Morning Chronicle* to a wealthy magnate of the East Indian Board, he felt as if his life had been suddenly smitten with blindness.

When a man is constant, there is no constancy like it. Ralph refused to blame Bessie; everything and everybody were wrong but her; and he treasured the little glove, that had been such a faithless gage, beyond all his possessions. Day after day he watched the post with a feverish hope that incapacitated him for every other employment. He wrote and wrote to Bessie, and was quite sure that sooner or later she would find means to answer him. The only answer that ever came was a description of her marriage festivities down at the old Hall of Farleigh.

Then he knew that his love was dead to him, and he tried to bury it in some sweet-scented corner of his heart; but just as he thought he was succeeding, he one day came suddenly face to face with Bessie in Oxford Street. He suffered so keenly after it that he determined on putting himself out of the way of such rencounters. So he advertised for some medical position and had three answers. One would take him to Canada, one to Ireland, and the other to India. He determined to let the decision rest on whichever offered him the highest salary.

The Indian appointment won, and within a few weeks he was on the road to Calcutta. He had destroyed every memento of his engagement except

one ; but on that last night in England, when he had sadly burnt Bessie's letters, and her little gifts, and even her picture, he had not been able to commit to destruction that dainty little glove that had so long comforted him. It seemed almost a part of Bessie, and though he several times dropped it toward the flame, he finally put it away with a sad and half-reproachful tenderness.

It found its home in no very romantic place—a secret drawer in his medicine chest—and there through eighteen long years it remained untouched and unlooked at. In this retreat it went with Ralph to Calcutta, and after a few months he had no temptation to disturb it. He had become an enthusiast in his profession, and a devoted botanist, and in the two pursuits found ample interest for life.

His salary was a very good one, and he was not indifferent to the fact. He loved money just enough to be anxious to make it ; and as his practice lay very much among native princes and begums, his professional rewards were frequently very magnificent—twenty years ago these dignitaries did not calculate quite so closely as they do now—good investments were plentiful, and Ralph was known in Calcutta as a man who always had a few thousand rupees for a profitable scheme.

He grew attached to his Indian life. One relay of officers after another was exchanged, or sent home on long furloughs, but Ralph never thought of any change save a few weeks every summer to the cool heights of the *Neilgherrys*. Probably he would have died a very contented exile, if he had not

received a letter in the eighteenth year of his Indian life, telling him that he had become the lawful heir to the barony of Erroll and Hastings.

Then he went back to England. But after the first excitement and pleasure of his return and his new position were over, he began to feel a sense of *ennui* and disappointment. His profession was dear to his heart, and it was impossible at once to find the calm, easy duties of a country gentleman equivalent for the exciting incidents and labors of a physician whose circuit had extended over a range of fifty miles every way. In fact, in spite of wealth and honors, he was bored, and seriously inclined to a journey of unlimited length in any country or countries that promised him something to do, or to learn.

He had come up to London with this idea in embryo resolving to make inquiries and preparations there. Bessie had no place in this movement. He knew indeed that she was living in Hampshire ; he had no thought or hope of meeting her, and would have avoided such a possibility at some personal trouble. Probably he still feared her power over him, for he had never dared to look at the only souvenir of their love, nor yet to love any other woman.

He did not hurry his preparations, but talked at the various clubs with various travelers on polar and tropic lands, and waivered considerably in his intentions. One day, when he had about decided on California and the Great West, he met an old Indian acquaintance at "The Oriental." They had a long

chat together, and as the major was leaving he said:

"Doctor, I want you to-morrow night. My daughter Belle—you saved her in that jungle-fever, you know—is to be married soon to Jack Dawson of 'Ours,' and it is her betrothal party."

"I never meddle in such affairs, Major. I will come another night and see Miss Belle."

But the happy father would hear of no excuse, and Ralph was obliged to go. It was a very splendid affair, but the doctor was used to Indian magnificence, and the splendor did not interest him. What pleased him most was the groups of fair, innocent-looking girls, their pale-brown curls and blue eyes, and rosy skins, and their candid, childlike joyousness, contrasted so vividly with the bronze-colored, dark-eyed, half-veiled mysterious beauties of the far East.

By and by, wandering through a conservatory, he came suddenly upon a sight which gave him an inexpressible emotion—a little, scented, pearl-colored glove, lying on a rustic table. He stood looking at it with a strangely tender feeling in his heart, and in a few moments a young girl glided up to him and looking slyly in his face, said:

"It is my glove, sir."

Then Ralph looked at her. She was a little rose-bud of a girl, clothed in pearl-gray silk, white lace, and pink ribbons; and he fell irremediably in love with her in that one moment. He followed her timidly about for an hour or two, and finally got an introduction to her—"Miss Bessie Wilmont." It

was Bessie Farleigh's daughter, of course, but he was thinking so little of the old Bessie at that moment, that the circumstance never struck him until some one asked the new Bessie as they passed her, " when she went next to Farleigh ?"

Well, this meeting changed all Ralph's plans. He did not go to California ; he went down to Farleigh instead.

He found the squire alive and prospering. Farleigh Hall had become one of the show places in Kent ; and in its old gardens, and again floating down the Medway, when hops filled the air with a richer perfume than olibanum or nard, he wooed and won the lovely Bessie Wilmont.

He has two little pearl-gray gloves now, and the first Bessie laughed pleasantly when he showed her that the two were excellent matches, *and made a pair.*

" The second gage redeems the first," she said, with a tender, happy look at the little Bessie so dear to them both.

Three years ago they were married, and Ralph does not now find the country gentleman's life dull. Indeed, as he has some idea of taking Squire Farleigh's advice and planting hops in Erroll meadows, I have no doubt he will find in the uncertainty and anxiety of their culture, taxation and sale plenty of material for excitement, if he still thinks it necessary to happiness.

A Dishonored Bill.

"It's a great matter, Alick, an' you're much indebted to your Uncle Peter. A desk i' the house o' McTavish, and a £100 a year, is an open gate for a lad like you."

"I shall always try to do my duty, father; I would not be your son if I did not."

These were the closing sentences of a conversation between Donald McLeod and his son Alick, as they sat together in the hot little office of the Carstock Iron Works. Donald had earned his daily bread in that dreary room for nearly forty years, and had begun life with ten shillings a week, and thought himself well paid. But though he had never risen above the position of confidential clerk to the works, his eldest brother, Peter, had been more successful; for, after a long career of commercial industry, he had returned to the "links of Avon," and built amid the fields, where he had played as a lad, a very handsome residence.

Peter had the reputation of being "a very close

man." but he was not unmindful of the claims of kindred, since of his own free will he had procured for his nephew the desk in McTavish's Bank.

"It is very good of you, uncle, and I'll never shame your thoughts for me," said the lad, frankly.

"Dinna be too ready wi' the promise, Alick. A lang tongue is a short hand. I hae got you a seat, an' you maun mak' room for yousel' to lie down. Do your duty, an' dinna rin i' debt—o' *no count whatever*—an' may never waur happen you than your ain prayer, lad!"

The kind wish begot the kind act, and Peter, after a little hesitation, took out his purse, and laid five sovereigns on the table.

"I'm no for gieing lads money they don't earn; but this is a by-ordinar occasion. How much hae you, Alick?"

"My father has given me £20, uncle, and two new suits of clothing."

"Ower much! ower much! I'm maist sorry I mad it mair. But pit the o'ercome i' the bank—to keep it i' your pouch is jist a tempting o' yoursel'—nae lad should do that."

"Where is Cousin Margaret, uncle? I should like to bid her good-bye."

"She's wi' the gardener, I trow; gae your ways ben, she'll be glad to see you."

Alick doubted this. He loved Margaret dearly, but Margaret either did not or would not see it. And now, when she knew he was going away, she was, if possible, more reticent and retiring than usual. He did not dare to speak of his love, but he

could not altogether hide it. Margaret read the unspoken tale, and in some occult way he felt that he was understood. Yet nothing but common words of courtesy were spoken, and Margaret looked far more at the carnations she was tying up than at her lover. However, Love finds Hope where none else would see her, and Alick's prospects were brightened tenfold by the flicker of a girl's eyelids and the shadow of a tender light they failed to hide.

He was well pleased with his situation, and soon became expert in the duties demanded of him. For a while the excitement and interest of his new life were quite sufficient, but after a few weeks things began to look different. He had been the eldest of an admiring circle of brothers and sisters, and he missed sorely the praise and sympathy which had hitherto bolstered him up in all his exertions.

He was lonely, too. His uncle had strongly advised him to make no friends with those beneath him in the house; and those above him hardly seemed conscious of his existence. The first enthusiasm of his work wore away, and he found no more stable motive for exertion and industry. In this unfortunate mood he was one day accosted, as he was going out to lunch, by James Blantyre, one of the cashiers, and a very stylish young man. Alick had held the door open for his senior to pass, and as they stood together on the steps, Blantyre said, courteously:

"Thank you, McLeod; I have been wanting to

speak to you. I believe you are a nephew of McLeod of Avon Hill."

Alick proudly acknowledged the relationship, and Blantyre said:

"I met your cousin, Miss Margaret McLeod, at Bailie Nicol's last winter—a very beautiful young lady. Will you lunch with me?"

Alick was only too proud and glad. The poor fellow was hungry for companionship, and especially company that could talk to him of Margaret and home. Blantyre ordered a costly meal, and Alick noticed how obsequiously the servants waited upon him, and that the proprietor put himself out of the way to receive Mr. Blantyre's nod of recognition. Alick had a delightful hour, and when they parted, and Blantyre said, "I like you, young one, and we must know more of each other," he was as grateful and happy as could be.

Thenceforward life was a different thing to the young country lad. Blantyre, for some reason or other, kept him constant company. He said "he liked Alick McLeod," and we are only too ready to believe that we are capable of inspiring affection. He took Alick to his tailor; he took him to boot-makers and hatters and fashionable barbers; and though Alick winced at the price he paid for these favors, he could not but perceive that his personal appearance was much improved. Then Blantyre began to show him "life"—to take him to clubs and theatres, and to introduce him to a lot of other good fellows.

Of course these events came gradually, Alick

knew well that he was on dangerous ground and in dangerous company, and over and over again he resolved to assert his own rights and his own opinions. But one little weak spot always betrayed him—*he was afraid of what people would say.* Afraid of the sneers of the inferior clerks, and afraid of the taunts and smiles of the men whom he called "friends."

Thus matters went on for nearly a year. He attended faithfully to his business, and he kept out of debt. About these two things Blantyre found him impregnable, and so he made a point of flattering him on them.

"You are such a fellow to work, McLeod. I was telling our manager to-day that you are perfectly overwhelming. Will you come to my rooms to-night? Lang and Brown will be there, and we will have a quiet game of whist. Don't say 'No' now, Alick. I'm going on my vacation next week."

So Alick hesitated and yielded, and they had a very merry party, all of them drinking more wine than was usual. When Lang and Brown left, Blantyre urged Alick to stay all night, and as his lodging was a mile away he agreed. Then they sat down for a confidential chat, and Blantyre asked Alick to put his name on a little bill. "Only as a matter of form," he said, "old fellow."

"How much is the bill?"

"Only £50 that I owe Scott and Trumbull. There is no risk."

"No risk?"

"Not unless you consider me a thief and a scoundrel," said Blantyre, a little haughtily.

Of course Alick protested he had the greatest confidence, etc., etc., and Blantyre grew cooler and cooler as Alick protested. That only showed how well he had studied his victim's character.

"Don't do it if you suspect me, McLeod. Of course I know I have tried to be kind to you in various ways, but don't do it from any sense of obligation. Don't do it unless you can do it freely, you know, and from friendship and that sort of thing. I would not have it," etc.

So the end of the matter was that Alick himself pressed the matter, and became security for his friend's bill at Scott & Trumbull's, fashionable tailors.

But in spite of Blantyre's assurances that it was "all right," Alick was uneasy; especially so when he got a letter the next day from his mother, saying that his sister, "Marion, had been so ill that it was necessary to send her to the seaside, and if he could spare a little towards the unusual expense, it would prevent the necessity of stopping little David's schooling." He showed Blantyre this letter and Blantyre said:

"Poor little girl! Of course you must help her to the seaside. What do you look at me in that way for, Alick?"

"That bill, Blantyre? Is there any possible fear that I should have to meet it?"

"What do you take me for, sir?" And Blantyre marched angrily away.

He did not speak again to Aleck before he left town again next day; and as the weeks wore on Alick's anxiety constantly increased. The bill was due on the fifth of August, but Blantyre's leave of absence expired with July. Of course all would be right when he got back. But he did not return to his desk the first of August, and before night there was a whisper that he had gone abroad with a sick relative.

"But he'll write! Oh! surely, he'll write!" And with this thought the poor fellow comforted himself. The second, third, fourth day of August passed; there was only one more post. He could neither eat nor sleep; he watched for it with an indescribable heart-sickness. It came and passed!

No letter! It would not do to have the tailor come or send to McTavish's about it. He went to Scott & Trumbull's and explained that his friend was on the continent. Mr. Scott was excessively polite, he had really forgotten the affair. If Mr. McLeod would take a seat he would see about the amount.

"It was fifty pounds," said Alick, faintly.

"Quite right, sir; and yet, quite wrong, for the amount, I see, is one hundred pounds."

"One hundred pounds! I don't understand! How can that be?"

"Very clear, sir. The original bill was fifty pounds. Your friend said he wished to increase it to one hundred pounds; and I asked him, as a matter of form, for another name. He proposed

yours; and knowing your excellent uncle, I was quite satisfied."

"And you say I am liable for one hundred pounds? Why, I never had a penny's worth of it."

Mr. Scott grimly bowed.

"I have not five pounds in the world."

"That makes no matter, sir. You can renew for three months."

There was nothing else to be done, and Alick did so, remarking:

"Of course, Blantyre will be home by that time, and pay the thing."

Mr. Scott only bowed, but somehow his manner gave Alick the feeling that Mr. Scott did not expect anything from Mr. Blantyre, and that they looked to him for the money.

Then Alick hunted up Mr. Blantyre's probable addresses and wrote, and wrote, and wrote to him, but never got any answer. He was paying dearly now for the privilege of being seen with "that stylish fellow Blantyre." He began to pinch and save at every corner, removed to poorer lodgings, and was so miserably anxious that every one noticed the change.

Before the three months were over it became known that Mr. Blantyre had resigned his position; his friend had died and left him some money. But he neither answered Alick's imploring letters nor came to Glasgow, and the time of grace went by, the bill and interest was due, and a whole year's salary would not pay it. Mr. Scott, too, was no longer polite; he was urgent for payment, and dunned

Alick so continually at the bank that the trouble became known to all. So one Saturday night, near the end of the year, Alick received the balance of his year's salary and an intimation that his services could be dispensed with.

"Mr. Thomas McTavish said I was to tell you that he didna like lads aboot him that signed for their frien's, they'd maybe be signing for themsel's afore lang." Then, seeing Alick's white and shocked face, the old cashier said more gently: "Puir lad! It's a pity, but when things come to pity they hae come to naught."

"What must I do, Mr. Coggie?"

"Gang awa an' tell your uncle Peter a' aboot it. His bark is waur than his bite. There's nae ither way that I see, Master McLeod."

This little bit of sympathy was so unusual from the prim, silent, old man that Alick determined to follow his advice; and the letter he sent to Avon Hill brought Peter to Glasgow in a few days.

"A nice mess you hae made o' your fortune, you fule laddie!" he said, angrily; but he settled the tailor's claim and then went and closed his own account with the house of McTavish & Co.

"You may write '*Finis*' on that leaf o' your ledger, Mr. Coggie," he said, haughtily.

"I hope," said Coggie, "you don't blame the house, Mr. McLeod, for your nevy's misdoings."

"Misdoings! My certie! Pick your words better, Coggie; an' it will be time plenty for you to speak for McTavish when I say aught against him. Good-morning, sir."

Then Alick went back to Avon Hill, humbled and sorrowful enough. There was no need of reproof, his father's face and his mother's tears said enough, and as for Margaret, he did not dare to meet her. There was little for him to do at home; he could find nothing to do in the neighboring town. He advertised and wrote to friends, and had attacks of hope that were as bad as attacks of fever, but nothing came of them. His uncle avoided him; he would have gone abroad, but he could not get the money. Half a year of this life made him so ashamed and desperate that he resolved to go to Stirling and enlist for a soldier. He met his uncle on the way, and the old man was touched with the despair on so young a face, and said kindly:

"The hay is to get in, Alick, and I am short of hands. Go to the field an' I'll gie you three shillings a day; it is better than naught—forbye you can hae your board."

The board settled it; he would at least see Margaret, and she could hardly help a little cousinly courtesy. He was hungry even for that. So he worked all the summer on his uncle's farm, and if it was any comfort frequently to catch Margaret's large, sorrowful eyes fixed on his hopeless face, he had, at least, that comfort. His uncle, too, softened in his manner towards him, and there came into the lad's heart a hope, that perhaps he might win back the love and confidence he had lost.

At the end of September he had £15 due him, and he resolved to go to America with it. One night he accidentlly met Margaret in the larch

wood, and in reply to her "Good evening, Alick," he told her of his intention, and said:

"When I have done something to deserve your esteem, sweetest cousin, may I come back and say to you what I dare not say now?"

And somehow Margaret cried and Alick cried, and how it came about neither of them knew, but Alick dared to do the very thing he had just said he durst not do, and Margaret listened, and went weeping and smiling home. Peter was half asleep over the fire, but she roused him with a kiss, and said:

"Father, Alick is going to America. Poor Alick! Father, I don't want him to go. He has borne his punishment nobly, and repented so heartily. Poor Alick!"

Peter looked at his quiet, self-contained Margaret with her hands before her face, sobbing, and was quite shocked.

"Why—why—what is this?"

"Alick must not go, father! Alick must not go!"

"Who said he was to go? The scamp, to make you cry in that way! Of course he is not to go. Have I not made arrangements with Josiah Reid and Co. for him to go to Glasgow next month? Does he think I am going to break my word for his American notions?"

"Oh, father! father! why did you not tell him before, when he was so miserable?"

"Because I meant him to be miserable. When a man does wrang it is the greatest o' a' wrangs to intromit the punishment. That's no Nature's way, lassie. If a bairn puts its finger i' the fire Nature

doesna say, 'If you do that *again* I'll burn you.' She just burns the bairn the first time an' the twentieth time alike. Burnt bairns don't go twice to be burnt. That's the true way o' teaching, Margaret. Alick brewed the broo he's been drinking, but he's had enough o' it now. I'm no feared he'll pit that pot on the fire again. Send Rory Mor for him, lassie."

So Alick went to make another trial of life, and this time his friends had little fear of him.

"A' things would be done better if they could be done twice," said old Peter; "an' maybe the ox that throwed the lad has flung him into a good place. I never thought much o' them McTavishes."

Alick is now a rich man and an honorable man, and Margaret and he have been twenty years married; but he never again put his name against any other man's, nor had he any sympathy for those who did; for, as he said, that man is well worthy of sorrow who buys it with his own name and his own money.

THE BELLE OF THE ORKNEY ISLES.

Whenever my Lord Banff chose to gather within his stately castle "a goodly company," there was never any lack of clever men and lovely women. But one night in the early summer of 18—, an unknown and wonderfully lovely girl excited, even among his critical guests, unusual remark and interest.

"I have found the Queen of Beauty," drawled out Philip Stanley, a splendidly calm aristocrat.

"Where?" asked the young artist, Earn Blantyre, lifting quickly his curiously magnetic eyes.

"Look."

Earn turned, and saw by Lord Banff's side a young girl of marvellous beauty.

"I think Rowena must have had the same fair, bewitching face, Earn!"

"Rowena was of the earth, earthy; put the lilies in this girl's hand and the stars in her hair, and she might be Rossetti's 'Blessed Damozel;'" and Earn, looking reverently at her, murmured:

"'Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.'

Who is she?"

"Some barbaric beauty from the Orkneys, I hear. Excuse me, I forgot you, too, came from the far North."

"You don't know anything about the North, Philip. But that is nothing. I should like to know the girl before all other women."

"That is not forbidden. My lord is very good-natured; come, he will give us an introduction."

In a few moments both young men were bowing before Flora, only child and heiress of the famous Orcadian Lord Magnus Stennis.

Well, that happened that is always happening and is yet forever new. Earn and Flora "changed eyes," and loved each other. My lord's wife looked very doubtfully indeed at the thoroughly pleased couple, who did not leave each other's side again all evening, and when the company was gone, she expressed to my lord her doubts about asking "that young artist any more to the castle."

"Flora has a great estate," she said, anxiously, "and you, as her guardian, ought to see that she allies it to some great family."

"As to family, the Blantyres would not walk behind any one. Young Earn is as proud as if he were an earl's son."

"Nonsense, my lord; we *buy his pictures*. No gentleman sells anything."

"It strikes me that Blantyre comes from the North, too; and, by the bye, the Earl of Blantyre's estates do lie in Sutherland or Shetland, or somewhere near the world's end."

"Then, very likely, Earn is one of his poor kinsfolk. All the clan count cousinship with him, I dare say."

Lord Banff sighed. He had been pleasing himself all evening watching the pictures the handsome, happy couple made; but now he remembered his old friend Stennis and his obligations as guardian of his daughter, and resolved that it would be right to keep Earn and Flora apart in future.

At the same time Flora was sitting passively silent under her maid's hands. She was too happy to talk. It was pleasure enough to remember Earn's low, loving voice, his bent head, and his wistful, admiring glances. Nay, she could never think enough of *that first glance;* she was sure that it had photographed for ever her image on Earn's heart, and his image on hers.

And Earn? More material thoughts mingled with his fervent admiration. He knew something of Stennis; he had trod its wild brown hills and peat fields, and wandered in the narrow flag-paved streets of its little town. Even the figure of old Magnus Stennis was a familiar memory to him, and somehow these recollections seemed to blend with others that gave him exquisite pain, if not remorse.

"I cannot give her up," he said, passionately. "I love her as if I had known her forever—and yet, if she knew the truth, she would not speak to me—but

she will never know. Why should she stop at Thurso? and if she did, Blantyres are as common there as pebble stones; there would be nothing in a name there." Such were the thoughts of the young man, sleeping or waking, working or idling.

He was shrewd enough to perceive that Lord and Lady Banff disapproved of any intimate acquaintance between him and Miss Stennis, and he received no more invitations to the castle. But he mingled quite enough with the same circle to meet Flora frequently in other houses, and once at a picnic a sympathetic hostess so arranged matters that they had a lovely moonlight ride home together.

Earn would have told his love that night, but Flora, with womanly tact, prevented the avowal. She knew he loved her, but while love was unexplained it had a certain delicate aroma and poetic chârm that would be lost in the revelation. "I am going to Orkney, Mr. Blantyre," she said. "And when I return, we shall know better what to say to each other. Perhaps we shall forget in the interval, unless you also go to Orkney—there are grand studies for an artist there."

"I should see nothing but *you*—even 'Sumburgh Head' or 'The Noss,' would only be places for you to stand upon."

"Ah! Then you know these places?"

"I am a Highlander—I have seen them all."

A sudden silence fell between them. Flora wondered that having said so much, Earn did not say more. Then, in a few days, Flora left London for

her estate in Pomona, intending to remain there until after the fair of St. Olla, held early in August.

This event is the great festival of the Orkneys and all the neighboring islands; and Flora had many picturesque memories of it linked with her childhood. About its height she went out one day, plainly clad, and mingled freely with the crowd, not yet too blasé to laugh heartily at the shows and the clowns and the perpetual quarrels of Punch and Judy.

At length she wandered out by the bay, where the ruins of an old Pictish fort offered peace and shadow and cool breezes. Sitting among them was an old man of a very handsome aspect, though it was evident from his dress that he was only a peat-cutter or a shepherd. He was apparently asleep, and had a little, old-fashioned daguerreotype in his hand. As Flora approached he stirred, let the picture drop, and looked anxiously down after it. Before he could stoop, she had lifted and offered it to the old man, with an apology. He took it eagerly, and as he opened it to see if it had received any injury, Flora caught a glimpse of the face—a face, indeed, never absent from her memory—the face of the well-beloved Earn Blantyre.

"Do you know him, old man?" she asked, eagerly.

"Do you?" he replied, with the caution of his race.

"Yes—that is, I think I do. Is he not called Earn Blantyre, a famous artist?"

"Maybe, maybe. He was a handsome lad, and a good one—once. God keep him!"

But to all her further questions on this subject

the old man was deaf, or gave the most unsatisfactory answers ; and putting the picture in his pocket, he resolutely dropped the subject. Yet as they both sat on the moss-covered stones, and looked down on the calm ocean, and the noisy groups round St. Magnus' Cathedral, Flora saw in the still splendid face something that aroused her keenest suspicions.

What was it she had been told ? That Earn was the younger son of a noble family—poor and proud and clever. She had loved him for these very things, and a hundred times had avowed her sympathy with just such a position ; and Earn had tacitly confirmed such an opinion by accepting her sympathy. She could not, indeed, remember any time when he had positively asserted his nobility, but every one had such an impression, and he had done nothing to correct it. Yet how could two men be so alike if they were not father and son ? And what was this old man doing with Earn's picture ?

They spent an hour together, and Flora got so far into his favor that he promised, if ever she came to Thurso, to help her find some rare shells and sea-weeds, and to show her his own collection. Flora instantly determined to go to Thurso on her way back south.

Her old steward was much astonished. "Why should Miss Flora go to Thurso when she could sail direct to Banff ?"

Flora "wanted to see the old town of the god Thor ; moreover, an old man called Evan Blantyre had promised her some wonderful shells." The steward

thought she would have to find the Evan she wanted among a few hundreds of Evans, and went away wondering at woman's ways.

But Flora also went to Thurso and had no difficulty in finding the person she wanted ; then exerting over him all her fascinations, she got herself invited into his little thatched stone cabin, and induced him to talk upon the subject so dear to her.

Indeed the old man fell at last readily into the snare laid for him, listened greedily to Flora's accounts of Earn's success, the attentions lavished on him and the money he was making ; and in return told her many a tale of his boyish bravery and industry. He spoke with such enthusiasm that Flora said impulsively: "He must be some kin of yours, old man."

Then a sudden coldness fell upon the excited narrator, and he answered cautiously : "Aye, aye, we are all kin, we Blantyres—earl and shepherd lad are of the same gentle blood."

Then Flora told him "good-bye," promising to send regularly newspapers and new books, the gift prized far above gold by these isolated but highly cultivated peasants.

She had satisfied herself, but she determined to give Earn every possible chance to avow such a noble father. She knew how hard this would be to do in a society that valued nothing but birth and gold ; and she knew, too, how the fiction of "noble birth" had helped Earn in a professional way. She would not expect too much, and she would give him plenty of time, but if he were low and selfish enough

finally to desert such a parent she would cut his very name from her remembrance.

All winter they met in London constantly, and many a time, in tender and confidential hours, she believed Earn on the point of opening his heart to her. But Earn feared to do so.

He remembered Magnus Stennis only as a proud, overbearing aristocrat, and he knew that Flora valued highly her descent from the great Earls of Orkney. He was afraid to risk everything on an honest confession; he hoped that in time Flora's love would be great enough to overlook his humble birth.

Thus the winter passed away, and Earn quite failed to do what Flora daily waited for. She began to be uneven in her temper towards him, some days loving and sad, others shy and fretful. Earn was keenly sensitive to the change. Life had become altogether Flora Stennis to him, and he feared Flora was going to desert him. One night she said to him: "Mr. Blantyre, the Earl and my Lady are going to Pomona this year with me. I wish you would join our party. Surely no place can yield you a richer harvest for your pencil."

Earn accepted the invitation with desperate joy and desperate fear. He felt that his whole future hung upon this visit, but he hoped everything from having Flora away from all rivals, among the grand solitudes of Stennis. He threw fears and doubts to the winds, and joined the Earl's party in the gayest spirits. They were not dashed until Flora suddenly insisted upon making Thurso, instead of

Wick, their last resting-place. Banff looked at her in amazement, but as Lady Banff supported Flora, he gallantly agreed to their desire.

It was a lovely night in June when they arrived there, and Flora invited Earn to walk with her upon the bold cliffs that overlook the troubled waters of the Pentland Firth. An old graveyard lay upon the grassy slope, and they turned towards it. Flora sat down upon a low stone, and read aloud the inscription :

> "'Evan Blantyre here lies low,
> Was good to his friend, and ill to his foe,
> And true to his chief in weal or woe.'

Was he any kin of yours, Earn ?"

But Earn was too anxious to explain matters here. He was quite sure that the arrival of the Banff family would be known to every one, and though it was very unlikely his father would suspect his presence, he might still wish to pay his respects, and so an awkward meeting be precipitated. He cared only at present to avoid recognition for another hour, for they were to leave Thurso with the early tide in the morning, and danger would be past until he could arrange his own way of facing it.

As the evening darkened Flora got sadder and sadder, but she would give Earn this last night ; in the morning she, at any rate, would go and see Evan, whether his son chose to do so or not. They parted early, and Flora went to her room in a very

unhappy mood. She loved Earn, but she must respect the man she married, and if Earn could deny the father, who had practiced long years of self-denial for his benefit, then, indeed, all must be over between them.

Earn also was very wretched. Whether the old man knew his son was in Thurso, or not, mattered little. He could see from the hotel door the little cabin, with a glimmer of a candle in the one square of glass. He remembered the days that his father and he had spent together on the cliffs and on the moors; and the long winter nights in which they had read all kinds of wonderful books together. He remembered his father's joyful enthusiasm over his first pictures, and the dear, old, careful, loving life they had led together, when they had been everything, *everything* to each other.

And as he thought, his heart swelled, his eyes filled—Flora, fashion, fortune, everything became as nothing. "I want my father! I want my father! My good, patient, unselfish father!" and with words like these welling up from his heart he walked rapidly towards the little cabin.

The old man was standing in his door looking up at the hills. Perhaps, like David of old, he was expecting "strength from thence." At any rate he was seeking it with upraised hands and eyes, when Earn suddenly fell at his feet, crying: "Father! Father, forgive me! I will never leave you again."

So, while he was yet asking, the strength and the beauty of life came back to him, and sitting together

with clasped hands, the father and son talked the long summer night through, and thought it but a happy hour. Much was left undecided, but one thing was certain—Evan was to go back to London with his son, and they were to part no more in life.

The next morning Flora met Earn very proudly, yet he found courage to beg her to take a short walk with him—found courage to take her to his father's cabin and say:

"Miss Stennis, I want you, before we leave Thurso, to see my father. He is far more worthy of your love and respect than I am."

"*I know that*," she answered, pleasantly; and then Earn had a double amazement. For Evan and Flora met like old acquaintances, and he heard his father thank her for books, and papers, and pictures and a *photograph of himself;* and Flora kissed the old man's brow and stroked his white hair and bowed her own lovely head for his blessing.

The hour was happy enough. It could have been no happier if the stone cot had been a palace, and on its humble hearthstone the heiress of Stennis plighted her word to the young artist. In the autumn, when Flora returned to London, Earn went round by Thurso for his father, and four months later the last descendant of the Earls of Orkney married the peasant artist, Earn Blantyre.

"No man has ever been so fortunate as I have been," said Earn, gratefully.

"And this fortune, Earn, dear, might have been ours a year ago, if you had dared to be true."

"Ah! but, darling, I was afraid of your noble birth."

"We can't all be *of the nobility*, Earn, but we can all have the *nobility in us*, and

'What noble *is* may hold in scorn
Whoe'er is *only nobly born*.'"

NAP FONTAINE'S DUEL.

Many years ago I was waiting at Smith's Hotel, Austin, Texas, for our camp to make preparations for a move westward to the Medina. I sat on the upper piazza, finding plenty of amusement in watching the groups beneath me. Every face was a story; each man there was a hero of some kind or other, and had done deeds for which the stars and orders of any earthly power would be poor pay.

But in every group one face attacts more than all others, and in this case my curiosity was centred on a young fellow of about twenty-eight years of age. He was very dark and very handsome, and his silence and immobility were remarkable, even among the phlegmatic Texans. In three hours I had not heard him speak save in monosyllables. But by and by he went up the street, returning in a few minutes at the head of about forty rough, half-drunken men, whom he controlled with a look or a single word. At last, however, he had a few sentences to speak.

"Jere," he cried, to a negro boy.

"Yes, sir."

"Go up to No. 8. Bring my things off the table there."

"Yes, sir. What things, sir?"

"A pair of pistols, a knife, and a pack of cards. Quick!"

"Yes, sir."

I had thought he was already heavily armed; but he calmly put the extra pistols in his bosom, stuck the knife in his right-hand top-boot, and put the cards in his pocket.

"Forward!" he cried, and in half a minute the wild little band were lost to sight.

"Nap has got more backbone than a man three times his length," said Judge Pollard, looking after him.

"Straight as a rifle hammer."

"Grave as his own gun barrel."

"An up-street fellow."

"When you want to pick a quarrel, don't pick it with Nap Fontaine."

"If you do, you'll get the best ready-made fight in the State—that's all!"

These, and many more such remarks, followed the young man who had interested me; and who proved to be the famous frontier leader, Nap Fontaine. He had been christened "Nap," or Napoleon, by the frontier companies, and the name came to be so generally used that Nap himself almost forgot that there had been a time when the belles of New Orleans spoke of him as "*that divine Emile.*" And yet it was only six years since he had been

their favorite partner and the greatest dandy that ever held a lady's fan.

He was the eldest son of Justus Fontaine, a large sugar planter, and he had been brought up in all the indolent luxury of the time and climate. But there was a rough and stubborn fibre in his nature; he delighted even then in athletic sports, and was a renowned shot. When nearly twenty-one years of age he determined to prepare himself for the army, but while the necessary steps were being taken he fell wildly in love with Adela Lawson, the daughter of a retired military officer, who had been in every fight worth speaking about since the little scrimmage of 1812.

It was not in Emile Fontaine's nature to do anything reasonably, and he loved Adela with all the fire and passion of his nature. There was nothing in the way here apparently to interfere with love making a straight course, and all went merrily and happily forward, though old Colonel Lawson was full of queer notions, and most people said Emile was sure to knock against one of them sooner or later.

But Emile had little fear, if they could keep off the subject of duelling; a topic which the colonel always handled with scathing severity. At that time duels were of the commonest occurrence in New Orleans, most young men had "been out" once, and some much oftener than once. Colonel Lawson detested the system, and did not scruple to call every duellist a coward and a fool. But as the imputation was a general one, and the colonel an

old and honored soldier, whose courage was beyond cavil, no notice was taken of these opinions.

One night, after leaving Adela, Emile called in at the St. Charles Hotel to see a friend, and found him among a merry party who were drinking and playing euchre. He never knew exactly how Eugene Le Clerc and he got into a dispute, but they did, and before recollection came he had challenged him.

In the morning, when he was in cool blood, he remembered that Eugene had been refused by Adela, and that, doubtless, jealousy and anger had led Eugene to take the method he thought most likely to anger Colonel Lawson with his rival, and so break off the marriage. He was very miserable, but he had no thought of abandoning the fight. He would be disgraced and tabooed in all society if he did that; but he hoped that affairs had now gone too far between Adela and himself to be put aside for the unfortunate quarrel.

He had scarcely finished his breakfast when the colonel's carriage was at his door, with a request that he would return in it at once. He found that the news of his challenge had already reached his affianced; and her father put before him at once a very terrible alternative—he could have his fight, or have his bride, whichever he preferred, but the colonel was quite determined that he should not have both luxuries.

Adela was called into the room to ratify her father's decision, and she looked so lovely and so despairing, that Emile had no longer any choice left,

What was the world to him without Adela? "If she and the colonel were satisfied, he would bear the sneers and scorn of the world." And the colonel told him that "he was a truly brave man, and now really worthy of his daughter."

So the challenger was in default, and the city rang with his shame. The papers abused him, the habitués of the clubs and bars did not know him, his friends were shy of him, his aquaintances cut him. At home it was still worse; his father offered to fight for him, his Creole mother went into paroxysms of anger and grief over his disgrace, his sisters said spiteful little things worse to bear than a sword point or a pistol ball. For a time he found some comfort in Adela's presence, but he soon fancied she began to look coldly on him. When they went out riding together no one saw them. All the glory and eclat of her engagement was gone; she was not able to bear the quiet scorn which met her when with her lover everywhere she turned.

Colonel Lawson, too, changed. It was useless for Emile to find excuses for him; he could not hide from himself that the old man had first become fretful and impatient, and was now quietly scornful. One night the lovers went to a ball together and were treated with such pointed neglect that they went home very early and cross. After this, Adela began to have headaches, and did not care to go out. In a few days she was not able to leave her own rooms, and the end of it all was that in less than five weeks she sent Emile a letter with-

drawing from the alliance, as she said, "by the advice, and with the full consent, of her father."

That letter was the death-warrant of Eugene Le Clerc. Emile sought him in the bar of the St. Charles, grossly insulted and challenged him.

Eugene laughed scornfully and said "he was not to be fooled again," whereupon Emile drew a pistol and shot him dead. Two gentlemen who interfered were severely wounded, and Emile walked slowly towards the wharf and stepped upon the Morgan steamer just leaving for Texas.

From that hour the man's nature seemed changed, or rather he dropped the superficial nature which was the result of social circumstances and education, and the wild, fiery blood, inherited from a Creole ancestry, asserted itself. Fortunately the Texas frontier afforded him a legitimate field for all the fierce passions which his unfair treatment had roused, while it also gratified his natural love for a military life.

I met him several days after this on the frontier, and once, nearly ten years after my first sight of him, under circumstances which seriously affected his after life. We stopped one night at Fort Duncan, in the Rio Grande Territory, at the long, low rancho of a thriving American settler. It was easy to see, though the family tried to make us comfortable, that they were in deep distress; and noticing that all the men were absent, I suspected at once that Indians were at the bottom of it.

I was right. The only daughters of the house—lovely girls of fourteen and sixteen years of age—

had been surprised while out riding, and carried off by the Comanches.

"But," added the mother, more cheerfully, "Nap Fontaine and his men are with their father and brothers, and if my darlings are alive he is sure to bring them back."

Before daylight a great shouting and laughing, and crying and hurrying of negroes, and rattling of dishes and glasses, convinced me that the party had returned successful. I would like to have joined in the happy, noisy meal, but being an entire stranger, I felt some delicacy in the matter. In the morning I was sorry I had not waved ceremony. Nap and his men had gone into camp three miles away, and three miles quite out of our course.

The girls were frightfully exhausted, and their flesh severely cut with the raw-hides with which they had been tied; but somehow I hoped that pretty Nellie Wharton's trouble might be the saving of Nap Fontaine. For as she spoke of him her eyes filled with a tender light, and all her face flushed as she recounted the bravery of his hand-to-hand fight with her captor.

"He's a number-one fighter," said the grateful father, "and he has 'lifted more hair' than any twenty men on the frontier. If he hefts an Indian, he is as sure of his scalp as the day is sure of light."

"He must like to fight," I said.

"Why, yes. It's meat and liquor to him. And he is like a lobos wolf—he gets better at it the longer the tussle lasts. And that's a fact, ma'am."

Soon after this he got fighting enough. The war

broke out, and he went, with the few men who stuck to him, to Fort Inge, and offered his services to the government. His intimate knowledge of the lower part of the Mississippi caused him, finally, to be sent there to command some important operations. Things had then changed very much in New Orleans. The rich had become poor, and most of his old friends were dead, or scattered, or impoverished.

Still all who had any acquaintance with him eagerly sought his protection and favor, for he was now a great man, had won a famous name, and been intrusted with much authority. He never sought Colonel Lawson at all, and it was, therefore, a surprise to him when he received a letter from that gentleman, placing their city home at his service. The offer was accompanied by an invitation to dinner, which, for some reason or other, he chose to accept.

He was now a strikingly handsome man, but Adela was much changed. Beauty in that climate has but a short, brilliant life. She was an old maid, thin, sallow and faded, and no arts of her splendid toilet could disguise the fact. She saw at once that her old lover was not inclined to re-tie the knot she had so rudely broken, but the opportunity was very likely to be her last one, and she could not bear to let it slip away unimproved.

"General," she said, softly, as she led him into the warm, scented orange grove, "can I hope that you have forgotten and forgiven the past?"

"Yes," he replied, sadly, but very coldly. "It is, I hope, both forgotten and forgiven."

"And—and, Emile—Emile, dear—"

"You must not call me by that name, Miss Lawson. I have forgotten it, too."

"What shall I call you, then? General seems so cold."

"You may drop my title, then, Miss Lawson. I care nothing about it. Out on the far western prairies they called me Captain 'Nap,' and I got to love the name, especially since a little blue-eyed wonder of a woman whom I saved from the Comanche has begun to call me 'Nap, dear.'"

"Then I can't call you that name."

"No, she might not like it, and I would not grieve her for all the gold in Christendom. The Tonkaway Indians called me, 'Big, black, whistling thunder,' but you could not call me that either."

Adela faintly laughed, but she was sick at heart, for she knew that she had bought her desolation and her disappointment by her own falseness and folly.

"When people profess to have principles," she said bitterly to her father, "they ought to stand to them. For my part I think it as cowardly to fly from them as from one's colors on the battle-field."

"Why do you blame me, Adela? A man has got to do as the world does, though I must say the world has a trick of punishing the very crimes it creates. But it is different with a woman. It admires a woman who has heart enough and pluck enough to stick to her lover through thick and thin. I always thought General Fontaine was right, and I was a fool to mind your complaints."

That was all the consolation she got. She went slowly and sadly to her own room, while the refrain of an old song went moaning through her heart, and would not be silenced :

> " If she will not when she may—
> If she will not when she may
> When she will—she may get 'nay';"

for the general had made an excuse and gone home early, having a letter to write to blue-eyed Nelly Wharton, who a few months afterwards became Mrs. " Nap " Fontaine.

TOM BURLESON'S LOVE AFFAIR.

"No, sir; there is no use talking about it—the thing can't be;" and Colonel Austin resumed his whittling and his cotton roll, following the finger of his Overseer Lusk, who was pointing out the number of bales grown in the Lobos bottom.

"First-rate, Lusk; what are the offsets?"

"Hercules has a quill in his back, but one of big Wallace's men dressed the wound. I thought you would like to see it, perhaps."

"Yes, if you are ready, saddle up."

When the colonel turned he saw Tom Burleson still leaning against the open door.

"What in thunder, Tom! did I not tell you to go?"

"Well, Colonel, I like to be overhead in every thing and I just staid to tell you that I shan't mind what you have said, unless Miss Mollie talks in the same way. Good morning, sir."

And before Colonel Austin could say a word in reply the young fellow had flung himself on his horse and was beyond hearing it.

"Number One rider," said Lusk, coolly.

The colonel changed the conversation. Evidently Tom Burleson was not a pleasant topic; Hercules and the Indian dogwood arrows were better.

In the meantime Tom, having ridden furiously in one direction for a mile, turned, and just as furiously retraced his steps. Of course, this brought him back to the Austin homestead, and this time he stopped at the quarters and spoke to a cheery-looking old negro woman shredding vegetables at her cabin door.

"Morning, Hannah. Tell Psyche I want her."

"Lor', Mass'r Tom! Psyche done went to Austin 'fore sun up. De colonel he's gwine to hab a dinner party to-morrow an' Miss Mollie she wanted some fixings."

"Then you go and ask Miss Mollie if she can see me *now*."

"Lor'! Who eber hearn tell sich like? You tink Miss Mollie git up wit de chickens? She neber seed nine o'clock ob de morning—wouldn't know de hour ef she did see it."

"Go, Hannah, and I'll give you a dollar."

In a few minutes Hannah, returned.

"You'se got to be in de garden 'morrow night at eight o'clock, Mas'r Tom."

But lovers do not have a monopoly of planning, and Colonel Austin had also taken his dinner party into consideration.

"If Mollie wants to see Tom," he thought, "she can manage it to-morrow night. I reckon I'll have a talk with her first-hand."

So that very night after their *tête-à-tête* supper, he said :

"Tom Burleson and I came pretty nigh having a fight this morning, Mollie."

"What nonsense, pa ! I should as soon expect you to fight me."

"Not at all. There is pretty considerable of a difference. You are my own child, and a very nice little girl at that, and Tom is—"

"The son of the man who shared your mess and dungeon in Mexico."

"No use raking up old personalities, Mollie. I like Tom well enough, but I don't care about him for a son-in-law."

"Well, pa, I shall have to live with my husband—you need not, unless you like—don't you think I am the one to be pleased ?"

"That's fair, Mollie, but you are a sensible girl, I know. Now didn't you have a nice time last spring in New Orleans ?"

"Lovely, pa."

"Well, what is to hinder you going about a bit before you settle on a husband ? Take all Italy for your pleasure-garden, and Paris for your ball-room, if you like—I'll pay for it. But this Tom Burleson has nothing but his rifle, and his horse, and a few thousand dollars. Don't you think now that it is kind of impudent in a young man of that kind asking me for my daughter and my property ?"

"Tom only wants me, papa. He is going to buy a ranch on the Chacon ; he does not care about money."

"Confound these don't-care fellows. He would put a girl like you down on the frontier, where the life is hardly fit for a civilized man. Calls it love, does he? I call it selfishness."

Mollie was thinking of Paris—she forgot this time to defend her lover.

"And then, Mollie, I should like you to marry an Italian prince, or an English earl, or some one of that kind. You have money enough and beauty enough for any of them gentry."

There the colonel left the subject, but he was not dissatisfied; the woman who listens once will listen twice. And Mollie Austin was no wonder of womankind in any one's opinion but her father's and lover's. She had large, soft, dreamy eyes, a tall swaying figure, and she dressed bewitchingly. She danced with great grace, could use a fan like a Spanish belle, and had read all the sentimental poetry of the age. But her education and surroundings had failed to awaken in any degree the deepest and best part of her womanly nature.

But Tom was passionately in love with her, and he was a brave, manly fellow, who always rose to the occasion, whether it was fighting or love-making. Mollie might hereafter have princes and earls "come seeking her love," but no one would ever woo her with such honest truth and passion as this plain Texas gentleman, who had only an uncertain tenure of an estate on the head-waters of the Chacon.

He was too much in earnest to talk sentiment. He said dreadfully plain, matter-of-fact things,

and ardently pressed Mollie for plain, unequivocal answers.

"Did she love him?" She must say "Yes," or "No." And looking into his handsome, eager face she could not choose but love him; and she said: "Yes."

"Would she marry him, and none other but him?"

He looked now so much handsomer, and so much more in earnest, that she said more frankly: "Yes."

"Then, Mollie, I shall come back for you next spring. I will have a pretty little home ready by that time, for I have a few thousand dollars, darling. You shall want for no comfort, Mollie."

But this was a step Mollie could not contemplate. She would not go on the frontier at all. "Could not Tom go to his uncle in New Orleans? She would a great deal rather he went into business."

Tom said he "hated business, and he hated cities."

Mollie said "she hated farming and she hated prairies."

Then Tom saw that the self-denial must be his share.

"Very well, Mollie. I'll give up the life that is so pleasant to me, and for your sake I'll go to New Orleans. When may I come for you?"

"Oh, dear Tom, how can I tell? Pa won't object when he sees you in a good business, and I can't marry until pa is willing."

And though her lover looked like Antinous and pleaded like Apollos, that was all he could gain. Beauty was to trust Love when Love could give good marketable securities.

People do many rash things at twenty-eight years of age, and Tom Burleson went to New Orleans and became a cotton-broker, in search of happiness. Colonel Austin was delighted to hear the news, and very anxious to know how far Mollie was responsible for it.

"Mollie," he said, "did Tom bid you 'good-bye' before he went to Orleans?"

"Of course he did, pa."

"What did he go for? Trading?"

"I suppose men either do trade, or plant, or fight."

"He was a no-account young fellow, anyhow."

"Pa, what is the use of saying disagreeable things? I intend to marry Tom when he is rich enough."

"Did you tell him that?"

"If it comes to a matter of catechism, pa, when are we going to Paris?"

This question was asked so often and so persistently that the colonel found himself there in three months after Tom's departure for New Orleans. But though for the next three years *La belle Texana* figured prominently in courtly and fashionable circles, for some reason or other she did not marry. Many said it was her own fault, and many said it was the fault of her fortune. Thousands of acres of land in Texas did not allure Parisian noblemen or Italian princes.

In the meantime her fitful correspondence with Tom Burleson gradually ceased altogether. The entire silence came without shock. Her last letter had been as kind as her first, but she seemed daily

to be taken more and more beyond his reach. And perhaps the silence, after all, was as much Tom's fault as hers. How could he ever hope to be rich enough to support a girl who visited with grand dukes and kissed the hand of royalty? If he had traveled he might have known the exact value of these little favors, but as it was, he took them as so many honest tributes to Mollie's wonderful beauty and worth; and so, finally, he got to feel among his sugar casks and cotton bales as if he might just as well "love some bright particular star, and hope to wed it," as hope to wed Mollie Austin, yet his love for her was so true and unselfish that he could feel glad in the brilliance of her prospects.

Then habit—that reconciles all men to their destiny—brought him at last a sober kind of happiness. He was making money, and he began to like the feeling. His business frequently took him to Liverpool, and travel and change of scene is not favorable to the nursing of an exclusive passion. We soon get through the poetry of our existence, and in three or four years Mollie Austin was but a fragrant, pleasant memory to the active, busy, money-making Tom Burleson.

Many a year passed away, and he heard nothing of her. Whether she had become a princess, or countess, he knew not; nay, he shrank from knowing—it was sweeter to keep her in his memory as Mollie Austin. He had grown rich in spite of himself and every untoward event. Whatever he touched turned to gold, and the war, that impoverished so many, only increased his wealth. He was

forty-six, and turning gray, and worth five millions.

"*But what does it all amount to?*" He asked himself this question one fine spring evening, as he sat smoking in his room; and as he asked it, his eyes fell upon his old rifle, slung for nearly eighteen years over the chimney-piece. He had seen it hundreds of times, but it had never looked at him as it did then. He got up, touched it caressingly, and shouldered it with a strange kind of pleasure.

"We'll go home again," he said, "old friend! A trip across the frontier will do us good. We'll go by Matamoras and Brownsville, and can pick up right smart of cotton there to pay expenses; and if we cross country to San Antonio, we'll be sure to meet some of our old companions."

An idea never trifled with Tom Burleson; the very next morning he began preparations for the trip. The Arab instinct is in us all; there are few indeed to whom the word "*camping-out*" is not sneakingly or honestly charmful; and in Tom it was really a predominant one. He quite forget about "picking up cotton," as soon as he touched the prairies, and he would not have lost a deer to have picked up fifty bales. On the beautiful Guadalupe he met his old friend Wallace, and dropped at once eighteen years of his life. Wallace was going with his men into the Lipau country, and Tom was eager to know "when they would start?"

"As soon as I have had a talk with Madame Austin; she about settles matters, for this company."

"Madame Austin! What has she to do with your men."

"She pays them; and we look after her stock, and keep the redskins more than a pistol-shot away. She 'd find it pretty hard to run a ranch here if Wallace's men were not around."

"Austin! I once knew a lady called Austin, but she lived on the Colorado."

"Well, that's where madame moved from. The Colonel got into a tight place before the war, and that floored him. When things broke up he gave right in. Fact, sir! I went to see him one day, and he was crying like a one-year-older. Miss Mollie had a pretty stiff time with him; but she 's up to mark, bet on that!"

"What kind of a lady is she?"

"To look at? Well, middling-like; but where she got her faculty for managing beats me. Old Colonel's purse was open at both ends. They say her grandmother was Scotch, but, gracious! I'm Scotch, and I never could save one dollar to say 'howdo' to another. She sold all off, when the old man died, on the Austin place, and came out here, bought a thousand acres, cash down, and she ranches sensible, I tell you."

"She never married, then?"

"Reckon not. I never asked her that question; might though, if I thought I could live in a house and eat at regular times."

The next morning Tom had changed his plans: he went forward without Wallace, and at the end of a day's travel came to a house which he was

quite sure was Mollie's. It was a long, low, rambling log one, with broad piazzas and a very pretty, well-kept garden. The doors on every side stood open, and the luxuriant yellow jasmine was blowing through them in great flowery banners. Everything was in exquisite order. It was just such a home as he had dreamt of eighteen years ago.

He ascertained from a servant that she lived there, but was then down in the lower garden; asked for a drink of buttermilk, and sat down to wait for her. Very soon he saw her open the gate slowly and come towards the house. She stopped once to put a coop over a brood of chickens, and again to examine some seeds that were just peeping above ground. Her dress was only calico, but it had a pretty, homelike look. He could not see her face for the large white sun-bonnet, but the tall, swaying figure had lost much of its youthful, rounded grace. She came up the steps wearily, pulled off her gloves and bonnet, and sat thoughtfully down in a little rocking-chair before the cedar fire.

"Miss Austin—Mollie! dear Mollie!'

She turned quickly as Tom advanced, mechanically putting her hand to her hair and collar. But when Tom gave her his hand and sought her face all over again with those tender, pitiful eyes, she needed no explanation.

"Oh, Tom! Tom!" she sobbed, sinking back into her chair and covering her face with her hands. "Oh, Tom! Tom!"

Then as they sat that night together in sober happiness and faded beauty, Tom renewed his offer.

"I am worth five million dollars now, Mollie," he said; "and you can have the finest house in New Orleans, if you want it." But there was a queer tone of sadness in his voice oddly at variance with such an apparent triumph.

Mollie, who would now have taken him gratefully for nothing at all but his true heart, was bitterly humbled in her happiness. Neither of them could avoid the memory of that other night, when in the glory of their youth and beauty Love had pleaded for his rights, and been made a bargain of.

"Five million!" said Tom, sadly. "It is but a paltry sum, Mollie, for eighteen years of lost love."

"Oh, Tom! who knows that better than I do? What weary, lonely, hard years I have spent, that might have been made blissful by your love and care. I have suffered for my—"

"Never mind all that now, Mollie, darling. It is better that the clouds break at noon than never break at all."

DAVIE'S SHOULDER-STRAPS.

Assynt is an old stone house, surrounded by a delightfully home-like garden—a garden where fruits and vegetables and flowers have all their proper share; where the song-birds know that they are welcome to build and feed; and where the honey bees have a special bed of sweet thyme and marjoram for themselves. The cheery house-place, with its blazing ingle and white sanded floor, opened directly into it; and old John Assynt could smoke his pipe by the fire, and yet see through the wide open door the roses and raspberries that were equally his pride.

But though both were in perfection one July afternoon, he kept his face bent upon the bright steel fender and the Collie dog lying before it. The truth was, his sister, Margery Seton, sat before him, and the subject of her conversation was still more interesting to the old man.

"I tell you, John, my Davie is a lad by the ord'nar. There is naething he doesna ken aboot."

"Hoot! Margery, woman! What Davie Seton *doesna ken* wad mak a big book."

"He reads Latin like the Dominie, John; and as for the ma-thematics an' thae things, it's just wan'-erful; forbye the way, he plays the wee fiddle an makes po-e-try. Our Davie kens something about a' things; 'deed does he John."

"I'm vera sorra to hear tell o' it."

"Noo, whatna for, John?"

"Folks that ken a little o' everything are pleasant fellows to know, Margery; but, then, the warld doesna do business wi' them. Everything runs to the *special* noo. A lad may be sae clever an' guid that he is guid for naething. Davie has mair projects i' his head than there are places on yon map. Let him choose a trade, an' serve his time *thorough*, an' then I'll see he has gowd enou' to start him fair. Them's my last words on this subject, Margery, an' I ken weel they are kind words."

Yet it hurt John Assynt very much to say them. Margery was twenty years younger than he. She had been his pet from babyhood, and he felt keenly the disappointment in her handsome eyes, and the offended air with which she put on her shawl and bonnet and bid him good afternoon.

John was convinced of the prudence of his resolve, but a satisfied conscience does not of necessity satisfy the heart, and when neither Margery nor Davie came to see him for a week he was so unhappy that he determined to walk down to the village and make overtures towards a reconcilation.

Margery met him in tears, and John was so sorry

and uncomfortable that he said with unusual kindness :

"Where is Davie ? I want to see the lad."

"'Deed, then, John, you'll hae the want for the wish ; puir Davie's gane awa to Glasgow most o' a week syne."

"An' what will he do i' Glasgow ?"

"An' what will he no do ? A lad wi' his handsome face an' fine education ! Blair Scott brought a Glasgow paper here, an' it was that fu' o' notices o' folk wanting young men to do their business for them, that I just gied Davie £10, an' sent him awa to tak his pick ; he no mak a fool o' himself, though some o' his kin doesna set much store by him."

"Well, Margery, if you're needing aught, you're as welcome at Assynt as the sunshine. There's naething better for Davie than finding his ain feet a bit ; sae guid day, sister."

John sent Margery as usual the best of his garden produce, and in a few weeks she began to come bustling round again, and to resume all her old talkative, cheerful ways. A few leading questions soon made him familiar with Davie's fortune in Glasgow. He had gone first to a tea-dealer, but getting disgusted with the smallness of retail trade, and its long hours, had left the place at the end of a week, and gone to a shipping-house. For the first day or two he liked the running around, but a couple of weeks on the Broomielaw in all weathers, and of letter-writing till midnight on foreign mail days, was quite enough of that occupation.

"You see, John," said Davie's mother, with a

perfect approbation and confidence that was charming—"you see, our Davie is nae fool; he was just gieing things a trial. It isna every lad would hae had sae much sense; an' he's weel guided noo, John, for Bailie Lahore is set up beyond a' wi' him."

"What! Malcolm Lahore o' the Kelvin bleach fields?"

Margery nodded, and clicked her knitting-needles with gratified pride at her brother's astonishment.

"Why, I thought several times o' writing to Lahore aboot Davie. We are auld cronies. Malcolm has bleached mony a fiele o' my worked muslins, an' calendered mony a wab for me. It's guid news you bring, Margery, for it's a guid trade, an' I hope Davie will stick to it."

"Nae fear. Davie kens weel which side his bread is buttered on, forbye—there's other reasons." And Margery smiled knowingly at her brother, and then changed the conversation.

After this John Assynt wrote to his old friend about Davie, and the lad found himself daily growing in favor. He had excellent opportunities given him for becoming familiar with all the details of the business, and what he valued still more, excellent opportunties for becoming familiar with Jessy Lahore.

Jessy was eighteen; sweet and fresh as a mountain blue-bell. Davie was twenty-four, and had a very handsome person, with manners and conversation which impressed every one with the idea that he was a young man of more than average abilities and attainments. The bailie saw the growing

attachment with great satisfaction, for Jessy's marriage with Davie would not remove her from Glasgow, and Davie would undoubtedly be able to materially strengthen the firm.

The winter passed in a succession of pleasant parties. Davie could hardly find his eight hours in the office and calender works tiresome, with the prospect always of a dance, or drive, or chat with Jessy after them ; and his letters to his mother and uncle at this time were of the most hopeful and satisfactory nature.

John and Margery had now one subject of which they never wearied. As the spring came on she used to trot through the garden after John, talking about Davie, and Davie's sayings and doings, while John sowed seeds, pruned trees, and planted vines. It was a great festival to them both, when they stood one June evening at Assynt gate, watching the arrival of Bailie and Mrs. Lahore, Jessy and David. For David and Jessy were now troth-plighted, and Jessy was coming specially to see "Uncle John."

"Uncle John" thought her perfection, and greatly admired Davie for having had the address and fortune to secure so lovely a girl. He and the bailie sat smoking and proudly watching the young couple; until by and by the two began to talk in a cautious, canny way of what each would do for the young couple. The bailie was willing to buy the home and plenish it, and Uncle John named the sum at which he would buy a share in the firm of Lahore & Co. for his nephew. The two mothers talked apart of

their children's excellencies, and after three days of pleasant negotiations the affair was delightfully settled—the marriage having been fixed for the following October.

In the interval Mr. Lahore was going to take three months' travel with his wife and daughter; and Davie was to be left in charge of his department. But he had not been a week away before an urgent necessity arose for his presence in London, and at a meeting of the partners it was agreed to send Davie there to look after his interests. Davie was furnished with letters to a lawyer called Drummond. This gentleman understood at once what was to be done, and as Davie was only needed to sign papers, Mr. Drummond introduced him to his family and told him to make himself happy.

Unfortunately Davie did this in a way no one could have foreseen; he fell desperately in love with Miss Drummond's governess—a rapid, vivid little Frenchwoman, with eyes charged with lightning, and a perfectly distracting skill in dressing herself.

Jessy's pale brown hair, rose-tinted skin, and tender blue eyes became colorless by contrast with this brilliant woman, who was always a changeable flash of wit, color and fire. It was a case of simple infatuation. *Mademoiselle* was older than David, and treated "the poor boy" with an alternation of coquetry and indifference that made him perfectly reckless, and long after his business was settled he lingered in London, spite of advices from Scotland and very plain intimations of disapprobation from Mr. Drummond.

The first visit on his return was to his mother and uncle, and their parting after this visit was a very different one from the last. Margery was weeping and imploring Davie "no to wrack his life for a woman neither o' his ain land nor his ain faith," and Uncle John, having said his say, was smoking sternly and silently in the chimney-corner.

For Davie had been to refuse his uncle's offer of a partnership in the house of Lahore & Co. He hated the big rollers and hot press-room, and white bleach-field, and dingy offices. He could not bear to think of spending life among them; he declined the partnership, and he wrote and declined Jessy's hand, and then in grandiose style closed his books and resigned his desk.

He was free to go to London now, and he had about £300. If *Mademoiselle* would marry him he would desert everything for her and go wheresoever she wished to go. If ever Davie had been in earnest he was in this thing, yet *Mademoiselle* received him in her most flippant mood. She laughed at what she called Davie's "illusions;" she "thought he had only meant to make pass the time," and put on a little tragic air at the idea of forsaking her "adorable Jules," who was only waiting impatiently her return to *la belle France.*

Both reproaches and entreaties she treated lightly, and either would not or could not understand the sacrifices he had made. Davie went from her presence a miserable, reckless man. He could not go back to Scotland, and he did not much care where he did go. A passing omnibus carried him near the

wharves, and on the India dock he found a packet sailing next day for Calcutta—Calcutta was as good as any other—he took passage in her.

His first letter to his mother was dated from there, and it was the last also; for Margery died suddenly a few months afterwards while sitting talking to her brother about Davie. John wrote some very hard yet true words concerning her death, and Davie had neither the power nor the heart to answer them.

He thought it would be easy to get a situation in Calcutta; he found that a clerkship in a foreign residency meant influence and friends; he found that native clerks could work for a tenth of his necessity; he found that the climate made luxuries absolute necessities to an European, and day by day, friendless and half-sick, he saw his little store of money disappearing. At last he heard that an overseer was wanted for some indigo works, and though he was ill, and the journey exhausting, it seemed to be his only hope. He lost consciousness on a great, hot plain, and found it in the hospital of a station occupied by a Scotch regiment. He had passed the crisis of jungle fever, but he was weak and destitute; it was something to be among countrymen, and he enlisted for a soldier.

Of course, in a little while, the drill and the monotony and the rigid discipline became intolerable. But for once Davie found himself in a situation where he was *compelled* to go through a routine. He *had to be* methodical; he *had to be* prompt, regular and orderly. There was no way of release except

by writing to Uncle John and asking him to buy his discharge. But Davie doubted if Uncle John would do it, for in their very last interview John Assynt had told his fickle, headstrong nephew that "naething but a prison, or a barrick, wad cure him."

He was learning with a great deal of suffering the lessons he would have learnt easily in childhood; but he was in a school where he had to learn them; and in a few months Davie was able to accept the fact and make the best of it. And having once acquired the precision and regularity which is the alphabet of military success, he soon began to rise. When he had been made sergeant, and put in a little authority, a spirit of ambition was touched which enabled him to work from a higher motive.

In three years the Sepoy mutiny broke out, and Davie won in one frightful experience the right to his first shoulder-strap. Henceforward no one was more rigid in discipline, more orderly, and more persevering. Indeed, life often hung on just these very peculiarities, and out of that campaign of terror and extremities Davie emerged, Colonel David Seton, and one of the bravest and most reliable of her majesty's officers.

He thought he might write to Uncle John now; but John had frequently read Davie's name in official reports as worthy of honorable mention. And when at length the rebellion was over, and the wearied men relieved, John Assynt went down to Glasgow to welcome the Scotch troops home, and was the first person Colonel Seton saw when he stepped again upon Glasgow Broomielaw. He had

some months' furlough, and he spent them at Assynt, fighting his battles over again for the old man, and winning the pretty Euphemia Laidlaw, the Dominie's daughter, for his wife.

John Assynt's days had no more shadows. He lived to watch Davie's children help the birds and bees rifle his fruits and flowers; and in the old stone house, where he sat once and read the father's deeds in Indian fields, a fine lad, called after him, sits now, turning with just as eager interest the war news of to-day. For in a few months more John Assynt Seton will buckle on his sword and join his father's regiment.

IN THE FIRST BLOOM OF MAIDENHOOD. ASLEEP ON THE SILKEN CUSHIONS.—"*Faithful Love's Reward.*"

More than Two at a Bargain.

Lord Noel and his brother Thomas were together one evening in early November a few years ago. They had dined well, and were now dropping monosyllables at each other over their port. Not because they were either stupid or cross, but simply because they had already discussed all the interesting topics between them—or thought they had. But after a lengthy pause Thomas said, idly:

"I saw cousin Jack Shirley to-day. He said he was going to Rycot for a few weeks' hunting. Julia Belvoir is there, and he fancies himself in love with her."

At this my lord put his hand quickly in his pocket and took out a letter, saying:

"Why, Tom, I forgot! Here is an invitation for both you and me. Suppose we go. I have no objections to Miss Belvoir; have you?"

"None at all; she is a nice girl, and has a captivating fortune."

"That is it; why should it go out of our family? I am going to try for it, and why should not you?

I'd as lief you won as I. Let us run a fair, open race, and we won't quarrel about the result."

"All right."

"You see Belvoir acres lie close to Noel acres, and it seems unnatural to divide them. That Jack Shirley has nothing but his commission and about three hundred pounds a year."

So the little plan was talked over in detail, Lord Rycot written to, preparations rapidly made, and in a week the two brothers found themselves in the North Riding of Yorkshire. They stayed at Skipton over night, and the next morning rode together over to Rycot Castle.

It was evident, as they approached it, that it was a "hunting morning." Scarlet coats gleamed through the hedges, or disappeared down lanes in every direction. They met drags with four horses, and dog-carts with two, and gigs with one, all laden with men showing above their mufflings a bit of pink. Hunters came trotting or galloping along—some of the young ones larking over a fence or two—and when they arrived at Rycot there was a gay and motley crowd gathered.

Noble sportsmen were lounging about the vestibules and parlors, and on the green grass in front were rich farmers and small squires—every one, indeed, in the neighborhood who could afford a horse and the time to "*hoont*." Among these merry fellows servants in livery were handing around tankards of sparkling ale and white wicker baskets full of bits of cheese and bread.

"Just in time," said Lord Rycot, cheerily. "We

are just ready to start. Your cousin, Mr. Shirley, arrived yesterday."

There was no need of the information, for just then Miss Belvoir and Mr. Shirley rode up to them. Miss Belvoir, always pretty, was doubly so at this moment, for to her own charms were added the beauty of her horse, and all the color and magic of the gay scene around her.

As to Jack, his cousins wondered at him. They were accustomed to see Jack Shirley walking or driving, and then he was only an ordinary mortal, but riding, Jack was another creature. They had just time to see this, when the gray, old huntsman approached Lord Rycot, and touching his cap said:

"Move on, sir."

Lord Rycot slightly nodded.

"Now then, gentlemen, ware *hounds*, if you please." And immediately, surrounded by them, his whippers-in, and about two hundred horsemen, all trotted away for the covert, half a mile distant. Jack kept his post by Miss Belvoir's side, and it was not until they arrived at the covert that the two Noels had any opportunity of speaking to her. Indeed, all day they were much in the same case, for it was Jack's motto to "be with the hounds;" and Miss Belvoir's horse and Jack's seemed to be unanimous on the same point.

"Light hands, a just seat, and plenty of pluck, Miss Belvoir, and you may leave Radical alone," said Jack. "He's a good jumper, safe at timber, bold at water, and a quick runner. I don't care

how long the run it, we'll live with the hounds through it."

After the hunt there was a gay evening, and during the dancing Lord Noel and his brother Thomas had several opportunities of cultivating Miss Belvoir's good opinion. When the guests retired to their homes Thomas Noel paid a quiet visit to his brother to compare notes of advance. My lord was well inclined to talk, and the two young men sat down with their cigars in front of the cheerful fire.

"What do you think of her, Tom?"

Tom glanced behind him where there was a slight movement along the curtains.

"Oh! it is only Ellis. He is deaf and dumb. A nice kind of girl, is she not?"

"Not bad. I prefer brunettes, and I don't like women who ride; but one can't have everything. And her fortune, young Crewe says, is fifty thousand pounds. Think of that!"

My lord did think of it for at least five minutes; then he said:

"I'll tell you what, Tom; we can't both win, you know, and I would not quarrel with you, old boy, for all the girls in Christendom; if I win, I will give you ten thousand pounds down; and if you win, all right—it is in the family."

"I'll give you the ten thousand pounds, eh?"

"No, no. I have the land and title. But we must be above-board with one another. If she favors you really, let me know, and I'll withdraw."

"That's square. I'll run in here every night for my last cigar."

So every night found the brothers together half an hour, and some very queer confidences were exchanged. But neither of them felt that it was prudent to give up the battle, for if my lord was favored one day, Mr. Thomas Noel had an equal advantage the next, and it really seemed as if the young lady herself did not know which of the brothers she preferred. But that she preferred one of the Noels was quite evident. She rode always with Lord Noel, and she danced and walked with Thomas. Even Lady Rycot seemed to have accepted the fact, for in all pleasure parties she contrived that Julia and Lord Noel should be together.

The hunting guests remained over the Christmas holidays, and every one is aware how rapidly love grows under such favorable circumstances. Rycot Castle was one scene of gayety, and life grew to be only a question of dancing, hunting, merry-making —and love-making. Dimly, but still consciously the brothers had begun to perceive that their courtship was becoming a more serious matter than mere business to them. When Lord Noel confessed an advantage, Mr. Thomas Noel was quite sensible of a pang of jealousy. There was, in fact, nightly less and less sincerity in their confidences.

"Thomas," said my lord, one night, when they had been six weeks at Rycot, "we had better bring this affair to a close to-morrow night. Perhaps Julia may be a little offended at our precipitancy, but women forgive everything when you lay it upon the strength of your passion for them. If you will ask her to-morrow, I will."

Thomas hesitated. Julia had danced nearly every set with him that night; had wandered with him in the conservatory; and listened with such glowing cheeks to his compliments and quotations, that he had actually dared to hold her hand in his a moment or two, and even then had received no rebuke. But would he not lose all by asking too much and too quickly? Thomas Noel was for putting off the great question until Julia came up to London, but my lord was of a different opinion, and they parted with the express understanding that at some hour or other of the next day Julia Belvoir was to have an opportunity given her to become either Lady Noel or Mrs. Thomas Noel.

It seemed as if everything favored this arrangement. Julia was unusually kind and winning, and of her own accord selected Lord Noel for her cavalier in the hunt. The honor was doubly pleasing because Jack Shirley heard it—poor Jack, who was sulky and cross at Julia's desertion, and who had almost ceased to speak either to his cousins or his false lady-love. He now only looked reproachfully at her, and flung himself on the back of Madcap. Lord Noel thought she followed him with more anxious eyes than were necessary, but he hoped in a few hours to have a right to control Miss Belvoir's words and glances, and he was more angry with Jack than with her.

Lord Noel was a cautious rider, and Miss Belvoir was this morning particularly inclined to humor him. The fox taking hilly and dangerous ground, she proposed a quiet gallop instead of following the

noisy pack. Nothing could have pleased my lord better; it afforded him just the opportunity he wished, and when they arrived at a pretty, little, quiet lane he ventured to tell her how much her beauty had captivated him and to offer her his hand and title. She listened patiently, with rather paling cheeks, she regretted, and hoped, etc., but the end of all was a positive refusal.

After this the ride was not very pleasant, and it was made less so by a little incident which occurred just after "the explanation" between them. They were skirting a very steep hill covered with slippery grass and loose stones, and just as they reached it a number of hunters appeared at the top. Most of them came to grief in the descent, but to Jack Shirley and his horse it was as easy as a race course. Madcap was carrying her head low and watching her feet, and with all her legs thrown forward and her body back she had adjusted herself with mathematical precision to the descent and was coming at a slapping pace down hill, while Jack, with an open clasp-knife in his mouth and reins lying nearly loose on Madcap's back, was fixing a piece of whipcord to his lash.

Julia stood still with blanching cheeks to watch him, and as he approached called "Mr. Shirley" in tones that would have stopped him if she had been in any other company; but seeing Lord Noel by her side he only lifted his hat as he passed swiftly by. After this Julia did not care to talk; she was evidently anxious and distrait, and took the shortest ride back to the castle.

The hunting party returned late, and Lord Noel did not see his brother until they met at the dinner-table. He had determined to give him a hint as to Miss Belvoir's evident penchant for Jack Shirley, and advised him to follow his own feelings with regard to putting off his avowal a little longer. But as he watched Julia and Thomas together he thought it best not to interfere. They seemed on the most confidential terms ; she pointedly preferred his company and attentions, he saw them singing together, dancing together and talking together, and finally watched them walk away in close conversation into the warm, scented shadows of the conservatory.

Then he was so anxious that he retired to his own room, and sat smoking and waiting for his brother's usual visit. He came leisurely in about midnight, lit his cigar and sat down. Ellis was quietly busy about his master's toilet matters, but though Mr. Thomas had been assured that he was too good a servant to see or hear anything outside his own business, he did not feel inclined to talk about anything more particularly than Lord Rycot's cook and the county ladies.

But when Ellis had softly closed the door behind him, my lord said queerly :

"Did you ask her ?"

"Yes."

"And were refused ?"

"Yes."

"So was I."

Both were silent awhile, and then my lord said

musingly: "It's queer, dooced queer! I am sure I may say, without vanity, that she gave me every right to hope."

"I am sure I may say the same."

A pause.

"I think, Thomas, I shall go to London to-morrow."

"I think I will go with you."

Another pause.

"But I wish I knew the meaning of it. I don't understand the thing at all."

"Nor I either, Thomas."

A few hours later they were enlightened, for just as their carriage was leaving, a footman handed Lord Noel a letter, saying: "There is no answer, my lord."

No, there was no answer possible, since it contained these words:

"My Lord Noel: When next you make arrangements about a young lady's hand and fortune, be quite sure that your valet is not engaged to the maid of the lady you have designs on. This advice from,

"Julia Belvoir."

"Good gracious, Tom! That rascal Ellis has told Miss Belvoir's maid all we have said about her. We shall be the laughing-stock of London. I'm going to Russia."

"I think, under the circumstances, I shall go to the equator. What a scoundrel!"

"Never was his equal."

Of course Ellis lost his place, and the brothers went abroad for a year. When they came back Julia was married to Jack Shirley and Lord Noel brought with him a valet who could not speak a word of English.

HOUSEWIFE AND WIFE.

One summer I spent a few weeks with my husband's friends, in the little village of Campbelton, Ayrshire. Some of the people were seamen, but the majority were shepherds and farmers. Among the latter class I was particularly attracted by a family of the name of Semple, for they seemed to embody all the typical virtues of their race—a piety that was stern but genuine, a morality which admitted of no peradventures, strict economy and thrift combined with untiring industry and scrupulous cleanliness. They were "well-to-do," owned a prosperous farm, and had "siller in the bank."

But far above any of their possessions they prized their beautiful daughter, Euphemia; a girl about whose bringing-up the village were unanimous in praise. If there was anything Euphemia Semple could not do, or did not know, then Campbelton would have considered such accomplishment and such knowledge superfluous. She had spun the finest of damask for her plenishing; she made the best butter and cheese in Ayrshire; she could read, write, and count with the dominie himself; and,

above all else, she was honestly, what this community valued most of all, "a God-fearing lassie."

I heard all these things of Euphemia from many sources, and I must confess I found them all true. It was impossible not to respect her; I found it equally impossible to love her; for there are such things as lovable weaknesses, and Euphemia had none of them.

One Saturday night a young man called David Brodie came down from Glasgow to stay over the Sabbath with us. Getting towards milking time, he walked with me to Semple's farm to get the glass of new milk and bit of toasted oatcake which was my favorite supper. On our way up, as we slowly picked our steps among the loose stones and heather stems, I told David about this little paragon of worth and beauty. I had no idea that he would fall in love with her, but he did; and yet, in every particular they were the antipodes of each other, even personally, for Euphemia had the brilliant fairness of a Scotch lowland lassie, and David was as dark as Donald Dhu himself.

I was the more astonished at David's sudden enthrallment because we had always regarded him as somewhat of a beau and dandy, with a rather faulty weakness towards fashionable life, and an unreasonable sensitiveness as to what "people would say about him." However, society is one thing and home is another. David was not wanting in that "canniness" attributed to Scots, and probably he preferred a wife that would stand all changes of fashion.

I soon noticed that he visited Campbelton every week; then that Euphemia and he came to kirk together, and read out of the same Bible. Then, of course, I and all the village knew that their marriage was agreed upon. My husband was very much pleased at it. Men never look further than the leading facts of a matrimonial engagement. Euphemia was good and beautiful. She would have a fair dower on her wedding-day, and was the undoubted heiress of the breezy little farm, with its fine cattle and famous cheese dairy. She was a splendid housewife, and would keep both David's and her own gear well together.

That was a man's way of reasoning; but, as a woman, I saw deeper than this. I wondered what Euphemia was going to do about her dress. The linsey petticoat and calico josey looked picturesque and appropriate enough among the hills, but on Buchanan street even her carefully kept Sunday suit would be old-fashioned and remarkable. If Euphemia had been like ordinary girls of twenty years old, I should have given her a talking-to about her wardrobe, but as it was, I preferred speaking to David. He saw at once the necessity of my suggestions, and begged me to represent the subject of silks and shawls to his betrothed. To my astonishment, this wise little body had fully considered it for herself. She had been into Ayr, and bought a light silk for a "kirking dress," a black satin suit, and a Paisley shawl. "She had a stuff dress and linseys and calicoes in plenty for any decent man's wife, and she would ware no more

siller on fineries." That was her ultimatum, and when Euphemia said a thing she meant it.

David had rented a pretty flat, and furnished it in a very handsome style for a couple whose income would not be much above £300 per annum. Then he married Euphemia, and brought her to Glasgow. In a week or two I went to see her, and found that she had transferred all her methodical ways and old-fashioned proprieties to her city home. Many of them, harmless enough and possible enough in a roomy farm-house, were here impossible, except with a waste of personal exertion that was exhausting and unreasonable.

She could get no servant to remain with her. For instance, her ideas about washing, though quite practicable among the Ayrshire hills, were simple impossibilities in a smoky city. But Euphemia was not of that class of souls that believe "circumstances alter cases." It was proper that fine linen which she herself had spun should be washed white as snow; and if it was proper, it ought to be done under all circumstances. This was but an example of a disposition which, having set before itself one idea of right, conscientiously follows out that idea through thick and thin.

In the main, such a principle is a good one, but every wife must see that it is subject to many exceptions, for no one duty has a right to crush under foot others equally sacred and important. It soon became obvious that the very things poor David had bought for Euphemia's and his own delight were turned into annoyances for him.

What pleasure could he derive from his handsome dinner service and pretty china? For if he brought a few friends to dinner or tea, Euphemia would suffer no one but herself to prepare it. Her nervous anxiety and watchful looks brought all her guests into sympathetic anxiety, and the entire next day was devoted to cleaning and putting them in order again.

A crease in a carpet, a finger-mark on the highly polished furniture, was a great trial to her, and every additional dish was calculated to the last bawbee. David soon began to feel that entertaining a friend in his own house was a formidable affair. So, after enduring either in silence or on protest this over-carefulness of what he had bought to be used and enjoyed, he left Euphemia to her will regarding it. Month after month the pretty service and the delicate gold and white tea-set remained safely in the dark presses to which she had at first assigned them. David never sent her any little notes now saying he was going to bring a friend to dinner, and "please, wifie, have things nice." No; but he took his friends to the Commercial Hotel or the Beefsteak Club, and how they had things there, and what the expense was, Euphemia could only guess.

Two years after they had been married she thought mournfully of the first time he had done this. He had then sent her a little note apologizing for his probable late hours, and placed the necessity for it on the fact of her having a headache and being so exhausted with the spring cleaning. She had felt actually a sentiment of gratitude to him at the

time, when she reflected that the silver had just been cleaned and put away in its chamois leather cases, and the napery and china closet just sided. But she soon felt very differently ; in a little while it became David's usual habit to dine away from home when he had friends with him, and this thing happened so often as to make it the rule rather than the exception.

David had stopped apologizing, too. "Oh, it is such a bother to bring them home!"—that was all the answer she got to her complaints. But Euphemia did not complain much ; that was not her way. She only looked the disapprobation she felt, went about with a dumb protest in her eyes and a severe sorrow in all her ways. A person must live in this atmosphere to know just how irritating it is. David at first asked her, "What was the matter?" "Was she sick?" "Was she angry?" "What had he done?"

Well, he did many things that hurt Euphemia. He came into the house with dirty boots, and though he changed them in the kitchen, the spotless floor witnessed against him. He was not careful of his clothes, and would buy new suits as the style changed, though she carefully mended and cleaned, and laid away the old ones until his drawers were full of them. At first he had done the same for Euphemia, and the summer silks and winter merinos laid away in lavender and camphor bore witness to his extravagance. It was in connection with the subject of dress her next trouble came to her.

David refused to go any longer to church with her in the clothes she wore.

Her rare beauty in her wedding silks had, at first, made him very proud of her appearance; but the wedding things got old-fashioned, and David got tired of then; he had bought her new suits, and he wished his wife to dress prettily. Euphemia could see no sense in such an idle wish. Her wedding dresses were without stain or crease; they fitted her comfortably; she would have thought it a kind of sin to cut or alter them, and a piece of wasteful extravagance to make up half a dozen new ones, with these "still to the fore."

Euphemia knew she was right, and therefore could not conscientiously yield, and sensible people would be inclined to support her. Was it reasonable for David to desire his wife to dress beyond what she thought her duty? Perhaps not, but the result showed that she might have sacrificed her scruples a little, and done a great good by the sacrifice; for David did not long go to church by himself—it was too painful—so he stopped going altogether. Euphemia felt this dereliction of duty very painfully. She was honestly a good woman, and she regarded David's neglect of herself as a slight offence compared with his neglect of God.

The birth of a son in the third year of their marriage for a time drew them closer together; but as the boy grew he was only a fresh source of trouble. Euphemia's idea of a father was of the old Roman type—a being always holding a rod and well inclined to use it at the slightest dereliction from duty.

David was sorry for the little fellow under such strict discipline, and took him often on sly pleasure-makings, where he treated him to shows, candy, and his own way, *ad libitum*. Of course Euphemia disapproved, and of course the child was growing up to regard his mother as a being bent only on his misery and his father as a beautiful, generous friend, always willing, but not always able to help him.

To a sincerely conscientious mother this warping of her son's moral nature was a grievous wrong, and at length, when little David was five years old, they agreed to separate. This was rendered easy without any public scandal by an offer which David received at this time to go to Calcutta for three years. There was at the separation no more than usual aggravated offence, no one intolerable wrong, only a long accumulation of small irritations. People even condoled with David on having to leave such an excellently pious, clever wife, and David could not deny a single word said in her praise. Equally Euphemia's friends condoled with her on separating from a husband so good-natured and cheerful, such a good father and such a good provider, and she could deny none of these things either.

They parted on Greenock quay very quietly, and Euphemia and her son went back to the little Ayshire farm. It is always a great experiment for a married woman to return to her father's house, and she soon found that she had made a mistake. Little as she had conformed to city life in her eight

years' residence in Glasgow, she had still altered enough to set her very far away from her old life. Her mother was dead; her father, a silent, stern man, who unbent only to his little grandson, seemed likely to spoil him even worse than his father had done. Most of her old friends were married, and had changed so much under their husbands' influence, that she did not get along with them as before.

She began to think much and to be disinclined for active work; and whether she would or not, her thoughts went continually after her husband. Now her stern conscience did her good service; she suffered it to take her strictly to task, and to ask her some very plain searching questions; and from every one of these examinations she rose a more miserable and a more self-accusing woman.

Towards the end of the summer, Mrs. Floyd, a wealthy English lady, sought a few weeks' board with her, in hopes that the clear bracing air would benefit her sick child. They soon became friends, for Euphemia felt now the need of some one to give her help and counsel. She had taken a strange resolution. She wanted to go somewhere where she could learn to dress and talk and entertain—she wanted to astonish David when he came home, and win back the love she had so perversely worn out.

Mrs. Floyd entered warmly into her scheme, and when she returned to England, Euphemia and her son went with her. For it had been fairly represented to her how travel and experience would open her husband's eyes, and that something more than fine dress would be necessary to re-captivate her

lost love. However, Euphemia had rare personal loveliness, very good natural abilities, and no small share of tact, if she would consent to use it. She gave herself up to Mrs. Floyd's directions, devoted her mornings to the study of English classics and good current literature, dressed in rich and fashionable attire for dinner, and spent the evenings in whatever company gathered in that lady's drawing-rooms.

At first she felt awkward in her unusual dress, and timid among strange and highly cultivated people; but these faults soon wore away, and before the end of the second winter there was no more elegant and intelligent woman in Mrs. Floyd's parlors than Mrs. David Brodie. Now she began to look eagerly for her husband's return, to lay plans for his happiness, and to dream and think of him night and day. At long stated intervals, she received remittances of money and a few friendly sentences; but, oh, how cold these sentences now seemed! She longed to write and tell him so, but her natural prudence always dashed the nobler impulse.

At length the weary three years were over; he was coming home. She hurried back to Glasgow, and this time it was her hands and purse and loving forethought that prepared their second home. She suffered it to lack no ornament or element she thought David would enjoy; and during her two years sojourn with Mrs. Floyd her taste had been well cultivated. When all was ready, she left her address with David's employers, and sat down to

wait. She knew he would come for wee David's sake ; she meant that he should stay for her sake.

And she was not disappointed. David, too, had learnt some lessons. He had seen women in those East Indian climates, without much of any charm but personal beauty, and he had learnt, amid license of all kinds, to believe that a pious woman, with a cultivated conscience, is a far nobler creature than one of mere impulse and feeling. He would have been willing to have given the old Euphemia back his loving allegiance, how much rather this noble woman, who had added to her sterling worth the graces of affection and the fascinations of a cultivated intellect and a becoming toilet.

So the second marriage was better than the first, for Euphemia had learnt that it is not enough to be a good housewife without being also a loving, affectionate wife ; nor enough to be good without being also tolerant and gracious.

ONLY MY LORD'S BROTHER.

The Lord of Lanercost stood in the drawing-room of Lanercost Castle, the central personage among many handsome men and lovely women. He was talking of the next day's hunt, while his handsome brother Jack stood aloof watching a beautiful girl who had only arrived that day, and to whom he had not yet been introduced. He knew well enough, however, that she was little Dacie Belmar, sole heiress of the great Belmar estate, and the matrimonial prize of the North of England.

She was so lovely that he kept wishing she was poor; kept wishing she had never come; kept wishing he could avoid watching her; for he was quite conscious that his admiration would be considered an impertinence, and could bring him nothing but misery. Yet he could not help watching her, and by and by the earnestness of his gaze fascinated her. She turned involuntarily her great violet eyes upon him. Jack blushed, and walked away. Dacie blushed, and watched him.

"Aunt," she said, "who is that gentleman standing now by the whist table?"

"Only my lord's brother."

"He is a great deal handsomer than Lord Lanercost."

"Nonsense! He has only ten thousand pounds in the world."

"What a shame! I think I shall make a friend of my lord's brother."

"You are a silly girl, Dacie. Just you marry Lord Francis and your opinions on such matters will right themselves."

"If that is what I was brought to Lanercost for, aunt, you have lost your labor. I shall begin to have my lord from this moment."

Then she rose and mingled with the company, having in view an introduction to Mr. Jack Lanercost, which it is needless to say she readily obtained.

The next morning was a keen, frosty one, and the whole company were at Lanercost meet by ten o'clock. Jack thought if ever any woman looked like an angel, Dacie Belmar, in her trig habit and hunting-cap, was that superhuman creature; and Dacie thought if ever any Englishman, well mounted in pink and top-boots looked handsome, Jack Lanercost was that person. Only three ladies followed the hounds, but Dacie, being Cumberland-born, was in her element in the wake of a yelping pack, and after a long chase she and Jack Lanercost were so far ahead of all the rest as to be virtually alone.

"If my mare will take yonder fence, Mr. Laner-

cost, I will touch the brush first," said Dacie, almost breathless with excitement.

"If the leap is in *you*, Miss Belmar, you may trust your mare. She will feel whether you mean to win or not."

"Good! then the leap *is* in me;" and Dacie and Jack took it almost side by side.

People who have ridden and won together don't often go back on such a tie, and Dacie's friendship for my lord's brother was soon too obvious to avoid remark.

"I must speak very decidedly to Dacie," said Dacie's aunt; and so she did, letting her very clearly understand that her marriage with Lord Francis was a thing agreed upon even while she was a baby; "and very properly so, dear; for a large part of Belmar came from the Lanercosts, and it was your father's wish that in this way it should be restored."

Dacie frowned, and asked, "is not one Lanercost as good as another for such a purpose?"

"One Lanercost has £10,000; the other has the title and at least £40,000 a year—there is no comparison in such odds."

Then Dacie pouted, and said "she would have none of the Lanercosts."

But love rules without law. Jack was soon conscious that he was deeply in love with Dacie Belmar. He knew also of her destination to his brother, and he loved his brother dearly. When they had been boys together, Jack had always fought the little lord's battle, and he had nursed him tenderly through the severe sicknesses to which

all his life he had been liable. He had never grudged him the wealth and honors his twenty months' seniority gave him, and now he had no intention to supplant him in the favor of the heiress of Belmar.

Still, when he was with Dacie, he found her irresistible; and when a man cannot conquer a temptation he is best to fly from it. So Jack resolved now to follow out a long contemplated plan, and try his fortune in the East Indies. In an hour after he had come to this decision he met Miss Belmar walking in the Chase. Wrapped in her crimson cloak and minever furs, she was so distractingly bewitching, that when she said, "Will you walk with me, Mr. Lanercost?" Jack forgot all about his resolutions, forgot everything but his great love, and said the very things he had told himself half an hour before nothing should induce him to say.

Poor Jack! He was afraid to believe what her tearful eyes and trembling hands told him, and when he left her it would have been hard to say which of them was the most miserable in the parting.

"To think he should ride so boldly, and talk so fearfully," said Dacie, angrily, to herself. "Why did he not ask me in good, plain English, to be his wife? a girl cannot answer a hint. I am sure that he might feel that I love him; my little mare felt my heart quicken. Oh, Jack! Jack! You might have seen that there is no use in your going to India."

Then Jack had a long conversation with his

brother, and their parting was scarcely less affecting. Nothing in this interview had been mistaken for want of plain English. Jack had frankly told my lord all; and my lord had replied, with great emotion:

"Dear brother, whatever money you want for any enterprise is yours as much as mine. I wish I could help being the eldest. I wish the Belmar lands could be restored to Lanercost in any other way than by my marriage, if my marriage with Miss Belmar will pain you; but, my dear fellow, we must sacrifice something for the old name and line. If you feel this hard, go into the old oak hall and look at those twenty-one soldiers and statesmen. No one can deliver a man from his ancestors, Jack."

Jack bowed his head, and grasped his brother's hand; and they both understood that they would part in two days. But fortune often works a miracle in a man's affairs in far less time than two days. The next morning was bright and sunny—more like an afterthought of summer than a winter day—and my lord and his brother determined to take a quiet ride together on Milnthorpe Sands. When they reached them they met Miss Belmar and her servant. She was walking her mare in the surf, as it rolled in from the Solway, and had come there to think in peace, as the brothers had come to talk.

She was just so fascinating to both of them that they never thought of avoiding her company, but with one impulse joined her, sending back the servant with the information that they would ride to

Creffel Bay, lunch there, and return in the afternoon.

To two, at least, that gallop over the brown, hard sands, with the fresh Solway breeze in their faces, was a ride into Love's land; and Lord Francis watched the two glad faces with expressions so mixed that no words can define what was at once so fleeting and so contradictory. A flash of anger, chased by a flash of sympathy; love for Dacie and love for Jack contending every moment for the mastery.

As they returned a strange melancholy settled over all three; they became silent, and rode slowly; but Jack and Dacie looked often at each other, and both thought they could be content to pace the Solway sands together for time indefinite. What Lord Francis thought it was a harder thing to say: his face was white and sad, and almost stern.

Suddenly they heard from a distance a voice calling to them in urgent, passionate tones:

"What fools are you, loitering here, and the Solway tide running in at its swiftest?"

Lord Francis leaped in his saddle, and looked away to the right and left, and then in Jack's face.

"Can we try the Esk channel?"

"Impossible, we must try and reach Arnside roads before it is too late, or all is lost. Dare you follow me now, Dacie?"

Their eyes met for one moment, the next all three were riding for love and life as they had never ridden before. The horses knew well what was to be done, and it was wonderful to see how eagerly

they responded to entreaties and encouragements. But when they reached Arnside every trace of sands had disappeared, and Dacie's little mare Zara gave one low, pitiful sound of distress.

"What are we to do, Jack? Is all lost?"

Jack spoke not.

"Then if we must die, I at least am glad to die with the two beings I love best; the last Lanercost can die happily with the last scion of Belmar."

"By good St. George, you shall neither of you die. Let us risk the channel. Leave Zara, Dacie; she will have a better chance alone, and I can trust no one now with you but myself. You need not fear. Selim can bear us both."

What words Jack said in Selim's ear only Selim knew, but never human being answered more plainly: "You may trust me—I shall do my utmost!" Then with one loud cry of encouragement from Jack, all took the channel. It was a three minutes' mortal buffet with death, but Selim struggled bravely, and at length stood quivering, trembling and panting on the Lanercost side in only three feet of water. Lord Francis reached safety next, but in an almost insensible condition; but poor Zara was not able to stem the fierce and rapid current.

"She lost heart when I deserted and doubted her," said Dacie, weeping. "I do believe she would have saved me if I had only trusted her." Then, full of a silent exultation, they rode as rapidly as possible home, for all of them had said words during the last five minutes which could never be forgotten or recalled.

My lord was so ill during that night that Jack's departure was impossible, and Dacie also kept closely within her own room. Jack knew now that his brother loved as well as he, and honor and affection alike told him that he must leave England as soon as possible.

One evening, about a week after this event, Lord Francis sent for his brother to the library. When Jack entered it he saw there also Dacie Belmar and her aunt. My lord embraced him and said :

"Dearest Jack, that you and Miss Belmar love each other is a matter confessed, and her aunt and I have had such a conversation that nothing is now more desirable than your marriage."

"But Francis ! My lord ! My dear brother—"

"Let me tell you Jack. The doctor says that this heart-trouble through which you have nursed me from boyhood is rapidly drawing to its only possible close. My life is so uncertain that I have no possible right to think of marriage. Do let me see Belmar and Lanercost one again ; then the twenty-second lord will have done something for his house and name."

So saying he led Mrs. Belmar from the room, and Dacie and Jack had a very long and sweet explanation ; after which, in a few weeks, there was a splendid wedding, and every tenant of Belmar and Lanercost feasted and joined hands and forgave the family quarrel.

The good Lord Francis lingered longer than any friend had dared to hope ; indeed, he passed some very calm and happy years, and often in his gentle

way took his namesake—Jack's eldest son—throu the Lanercost oak hall, pointing out, with proud a grave enthusiasm, the great men who had been h ancestors, and telling the child what he must when he became the twenty-fourth lord of Lan cost.

"For, Frank," he said, on the night when the l was eight years old, "you must do something *for* as well as yourself. I have been but a poor lo and have neither led councils nor taken cities."

But when Lord Francis was in his grave, and t lad repeated his charge to his father, Jack answer with tears:

"He was the noblest Lanercost of them all. Th did well unto themselves, but he conquered himse and made an offering of his life for his brother a his love."

THE GYPSY LADY.

There is not in England a more picturesque sight than the horse fair held at Thorncastle, in Lincolnshire. There may be seen not only the finest show of racers and roadsters, draught, driving, and saddle horses, but the queerest gathering of sportsmen, Yorkshire and gypsy jockeys, farmers and country gentlemen.

One day, in the very height of the fair, there was quite a crowd around a beautiful mare that had suddenly become ill-tempered, and would suffer no one to mount her. Her owner, the young squire of Grimsby, stood looking at her with a good deal of toleration.

"She is as dainty and skittish as a girl of fifteen," he said to her groom, "and not in a mood to be handled. Take her back to her stable, Jasper."

Just then some one outside the ring gave a peculiar whistle, and the mare answered it an once with a low whinny, turning her head eagerly towards the sound.

"Let me pass, gentlemen. I'll show you the mare's paces. She will let me mount her, I'll be bound."

The speaker was a strikingly handsome man, slim, dark, and graceful. He wore a sporting coat, with buttons made of half crowns, and a scarlet vest, with buttons made of spaded guineas. His breeches were of the widest possible corduroy; his leggings of buff cloth; his highlows shod with nails. Under his arm he carried a long, elastic riding-whip, silver-knobbed and scarlet-lashed.

He walked straight to the mare, fondled her nose in his palm, and said something to her in the Rommany tongue. In one moment there was a loving understanding between them; in the next moment she was flying up the street as airily as a fresh fox before the hounds.

Grimsby waited, a little anxiously; but the mare and her rider soon came in sight again, and in another moment she stood tossing her head among the crowd in the horse-market.

"She is a beautiful creature, squire. What is her price?"

"£200; no less."

"Then," said the stranger, "if you will go to the inn we will finish the bargain. I will give you £200 for her."

There was a little stir at this, and some of the gentlemen around said audibly that "he was a gypsy and that Grimsby had better mind what he was about." Squire Grimsby, however, was a man who formed his own opinions. He watched the man

and the mare talking to each other a minute, and then said :

"Friend, my mare seems to approve of you. I should like to humor you. What is your name?"

"Tawno Chachipen"

"A heathenish name."

"I am a heathen. I am a Rommany Kral ; but my gold is good Christian gold. Her majesty's face vouches for it. God save the queen, sir."

"All right, Mr. Tawno Chachipen ; you shall have the mare."

So the bargain was amicably settled, and Grimsby —being, as I have said, a queer man, according to the ideas of Lincoln squires—was so smitten with the beauty and wit and odds and ends of queer knowledge that Tawno exhibited that he actually asked him to eat with him, shook hands with him at parting, and said he had seldom spent a pleasanter evening.

During his further stay at the fair, he often thought of the clever gypsy Kral, and when he met him one night within two miles of his own manor-house, he was very much pleased.

"Are you staying near here, Tawno?"

"I should like to. My people wish to camp in the little beech wood yonder, but it is your honor's ground, and—"

"Your people are welcome, Tawno ; you will make them behave."

"Fin of fish, nor feather of game, nor fruit, nor fleece shall they touch, nor anything that is your honors. I'll see to that."

So Tawno's band settled in the beech wood, and the young squire got into the habit of meeting Tawno on his return from Boston market every week, and there was a very sincere liking between them. One evening the squire came in sight of the gypsy camp. A company of elfish looking men and women were loafing in the doors of little conical tents, and Tawno leaned against a wagon, fiddling for a beautiful girl who was dancing to some wild Eastern measure, clapping her hands, and chanting a line with every change of attitude. Grimsby made a sign to Tawno not to notice his presence, and the lovely dancer, unconscious of it, finished her performance. Then, after his introduction, the moon rose high and bright, there was more singing and dancing, and the girl sat by his side, and broke for him the rich spice-cake that only a gypsy can mix, and with a wonderful glance from two powerful eyes, told him that her name was Luraphon.

Luraphon was Tawno's sister, and if Tawno's influence over the young squire had been great, there was no wonder that Luraphon captivated him. After that first visit to the camp, Grimsby was there every day, and it needed no fortune-teller to discover the charm that drew him. No one noticed his visits, and no check was put upon his conversations with the gipsy girl. When the "Harvest Home" supper was held in the barn, several of the gipsy band were present, and Grimsby danced with Tawno's wife, Ercilla, and Tawno's sister, Luraphon. People laughed a little, but set it down to the squire's good nature; it was understood to be a hint to the villa-

gers to treat the strangers courteously. But at the Christmas festival his partiality offended the country lasses, and some ill-natured remarks sifted through the country side to Tawno's ears.

The next market-day he waited on the road for John Grimsby, and after a cool salutation told him to speak no more with his sister. He was sulky and defiant, would listen to no explanation, and received John's protestations of honorable friendship with quiet scorn.

Then that happened that any one might have foreseen. When Luraphon went ostensibly to tell fortunes in Boston, she really went into Grimsby woods to walk with the young squire. An old gypsy woman soon suspected this, and told Tawno.

Then Tawno watched Luraphon, and one afternoon, in the forest, saw John Grimsby sitting on a bank and bending eagerly over something which she held in her hand. He made a swift, cautious circuit and got in front of them. John was actually teaching the girl to read. He would have killed them both on the spot but for two considerations—John had been his friend, and he yet loved him: and in his behavior to his sister he could not find a shadow of anything but what was respectful and tender.

He watched them until they parted. He saw John give her some silver, and knew that it was to be handed to him as the wages of her divination. That night he called her again into his tent, beat her severely, and forbid her to speak with John Grimsby, assuring her, if she did, he would send her

to the Haiks, a tribe in Cornwall, noted for their cruel and desperate characters.

After this, for a week or two, the poor girl had a miserable time. The young women jeered her, the old ones beat her, and all the tribe looked upon her as their enemy, for it had never had such comfortable and profitable quarters, and they feared Tawno would rather move the whole camp than part with his sister. One day a servant belonging to Grimsby manor came to the camp, saying that the squire wanted the hay cut in a hurry, offering such wages for both men and women as no gypsy could refuse. All of them, excepting one very old woman and Luraphon, were in the Grimsby meadows next day.

Then John Grimsby visited the camp, and used such golden arguments with the old crone that she consented to go to sleep for an hour. Unfortunately Tawno had suspected the whole arrangement. He followed the squire to the camp, and watched him walking up and down the dingle with Luraphon. Once, indeed, when he saw Luraphon cry and John wipe away her tears and kiss her tenderly, he drew his knife, and felt for a moment as if he must kill them.

But he was no bravo, and in many respects he was a reasonable man. He could not accuse John of the slightest wrong to his sister, unless it was a wrong to love her. He knew that Luraphon was beautiful, and that at first he himself had done all he could to encourage her influence over the squire. He had done it for his people's good, and had not meant it to have any other result.

So the gypsy chief watched the squire away, and

then went back to the hay-field ; but his absence had been noted, and when he went back to camp John Grimsby followed him. Within five minutes afterwards the anxious lover heard angry words and still fiercer blows, and unable to endure Luraphon's sobs and cries he forced his way into Tawno's tent, and grasped the gypsy's wrists in a vice-like clasp. Tawno heard his remonstrances with sullen anger, said he should correct his women as he saw fit, and with an ominous politeness invited the squire outside the camp. Then Luraphon looked him steadily in the face, and pointing to her brother, said, pointedly, "*There is to be an end of this ;*" whereupon John's face lightened, and he went away without a word.

The next morning, before breakfast, Tawno was at the manor-house, demanding to see the squire. In half an hour John came down, and Tawno, kneeling before him and sobbing passionately, besought that his sister might be given back to him. John was amazed, and it was some time before he could understand from Tawno's confused ejaculations that Luraphon had disappeared and could nowhere be found. Suicide being almost unknown among Rommanys, Tawno rejected the idea, and John's distress was so genuine, he could not accuse him. Besides, he had already examined all the Grimsby horses, and found that none of them had been out during the night, while his inquiries in the kitchen had satisfied him that the squire had not left his own house after seven o'clock of the previous evening.

Time wore on, but no news came of the lost girl. Tawno sent messengers to various camps in England and Scotland, but she had neither been seen nor heard of by any of them. Neither had John Grimsby any answer for the questioning glance that Tawno always met him with; but he quietly gave his people many privileges, and tried to atone for the suffering and loss his love for the gypsy girl had brought on them.

One day, nearly two years after her disappearance, John met Tawno, and the latter seemed inclined to renew the cordial speech of their early acquaintance.

"We are going away, Squire," he said, "and it would be a dog's trick to steal off without a 'Thank you.'"

"Have you heard anything of—of—'

"Of *her?* Not a word. But there is no use hanging round here longer. She'll never come back. Her great grandmother was a Magyar gypsy. I think she has gone to her Hungarian kindred. Let her go—to leave me for a few blows! Her mother would have kissed my father's feet after them."

John was silent. After a while he said:

"Tawno, you have done me great wrong in your thoughts, but I never blamed you for it. I would have died rather than thought evil of Luraphon. I loved her dearly and honorably. It would have been better if you had taken the word of an English gentleman for this. But I, too, am going away. I want you to remain in your quarters till I return."

"Then I will stay until you get back."

"Thank you, Tawno; try to think kindly of me; Luraphon's brother must always be my brother." John put out his hand, and the gypsy kral took it with an emotion noways derogatory to his kingly dignity.

Then John Grimsby went abroad, and about three months after his departure the astounding news came that he had married a beautiful French lady. Tawno held his peace; but he was angry with his white brother, and he thought bitterly of the girl that had once been so dear to them both. If he had not shaken hands over his promise he would have broken it, and gone into Yorkshire.

One night, six months after John's departure, a servant of Grimsby passed hurriedly and said the squire was hourly expected. Tawno did not think he was glad. He began to think of the changes the squire's return must bring and of the removal of his people. A carriage stopped at the little stile leading down to the dingle, and Tawno saw at a glance that it was John who was alighting. Not a little flattered at this prompt remembrance, he ran into the tents to tell the women to be ready with a good wish and a courtesy, and at the door of his tent, when he turned, stood John and a beautiful lady dressed in the richest and most fashionable clothing. Ercilla stepped forward and gave a loud cry, and Tawno felt at the same moment a little wet cheek against his and heard the dearest of voices saying:

"Tawno, brother! Brother Tawno!"

Yes, the squire's bride was the Rommany girl,

Luraphon. She had been two years in a fine English and French school in Paris. She had learned to read and write and play and sing wonderfully. She had learned how to dress and talk and behave like a gentlewoman, and she showed Ercilla, with a pleasant laugh, her once rough little brown hands, now soft and white and delicate.

There had been no great plot, and there was not much to discover. When Tawno first began to treat her badly, John had arranged with his lawyer in Boston to take Luraphon to the school selected *whenever* the girl came to him. When she fled he had at once taken her to London, procured her a suitable wardrobe, and then sent her safely to Paris. After she was able to write she had communicated frequently with John, but they had never met again until he went for her as his wife.

Tawno had a great struggle with himself, but he could not resist Luraphon's kisses and John's outstretched hand. He took it again, saying, "Then we are twice brothers." But he did not stay long at Grimsby. One day he went up to the Hall and asked to see his sister alone. When he went away he spoke to no one, and it was evident that he had been weeping; he had sense enough to know that Luraphon's education and marriage essentially separated them, and he meant his farewell to be a final one.

The fair, blonde Saxon Grimsbys have now a generation of dark, handsome sons and daughters, and Luraphon sits among them, a happy, loving lady.

She has never had a longing for her old wild life that a kiss from John could not remove.

Tawno and his people, disgusted with the rapid invasion of all England's rustic roads and commons by railways, emigrated to America seven years ago; and, scarcely six months since, I came across him in a pretty wood, ankle deep in wild violets, outside a Jersey village. He spoke affectionately of his brother Grimsby, and seemed to think it a great honor for an English squire to have won a Rommany princess.

THE SAVING OF ESHOLD.

The clanging of factory bells—the clamping of workmen's clogs—the thud and tremble of machinery—these were common sounds in Baildon, and no one noticed them any more than they did the white-faced eager crowds that poured through the great gates of the various mills.

Very pretty women and very keen-looking men were among them; but we have only to do with Joseph Nalor and his daughter Grace. They walked quickly down the street together, neither of them saying a word until they had passed the "Piece Hall," around the doors of which a group of masters were discussing yarns and prices. Joseph did not apparently glance at them, yet he said, quietly:

"Yon young Mark Senhouse I just can't abide his ways. What for did he speak to thee this morning?"

"He nobbut asked me when I'd been to Eshold or seen Miss Lucy."

"I thowt so. Now, thoult neither mak' nor med-

dle in his affairs ; and doant thee be setten up with his foine words—they mean nought, nought at all."

Grace made neither answer nor promise, for by this time they were inside Nalor's cottage, and his wife Hannah was serving dinner as rapidly as possible. She had her own opinions about Mark and Lucy, and when Mark entered the long low room in which she sat picking wool that afternoon, she gave him a glance of encouragement.

He was a very handsome fellow, with great, dreamy, introspective eyes, and a delicacy of face and figure very remarkable among the physically gigantic men of the North Riding. He caught Grace's meaning, and slowly advanced, stopping at each group of women and boys to examine their work. Grace lifted a handful of the peculiar staple from the Punjaub, and asked him some question concerning it. Mark fingered it carefully, returned it with some technical remark, and walked carelessly away. Yet she knew that when he handed back the shiny, curly white mass, a letter was in it ; and Mark carried away with him the assurance that it would be delivered.

He hoped that afternoon, for the mill closed sooner on Saturdays, and Grace usually went to Eshold afterwards, to see her aunt—who was housekeeper—and Miss Lucy Eshold, who was her foster-sister, and had been her playmate.

Eshold was two miles from Baildon, an old gray stone Hall, crusted with golden lichens, and made picturesque by its numerous bay-windows and deep, shadowed angles. Two acres of sweet, well-kept

gardens surrounded it, full of luscious fruits, and quaintly cut yew trees, and box hedges, and beds of marigolds and lavender and clove pinks.

Grace entered by the park and took her way through them. She half hoped to find Lucy in the clematis shelter, but saw no one until she reached the Hall. Then she saw the squire standing in the shadow of the great entrance, and apparently full of anger at some rough, blustering fellow, that Grace wondered to see him talking to at all. He looked at her without any conscious recognition, and, with a courtesy, she passed the disputants, and soon found her way to Lucy Eshold's room.

The door was open, and Lucy sat in the oriel, reading. Grace stood a moment to look at her. Long brown curls shadowed a rose-like face, and fell over the fine white muslin robe. From the dainty laces and pink ribbons at her throat to the dainty slippers and pink bows on her feet she was perfectly and freshly beautiful.

She stood up with a start and a blush when Grace spoke, and all her face glowed with an inquiry she did not like to put into words. Grace answered it by laying the letter upon the open page, and then saying :

" I'm goan to see Aunt Martha a bit. Maybe t' answer will be ready when we've had our crack oot."

The answer was ready when Grace returned, and Lucy was ready also to discuss it.

The squire bore the traces of great annoyance when Lucy came down to make his tea in the sum-

mer twilight. Yet he smoothed her brown curls lovingly as he said :

" I saw Grace here ; what did she want ?"

" She came to see me, and to bring me a note from Mark Senhouse. Father, I wish you would let Mark come sometimes ; you might learn to like him."

" I have nothing against Mark as Mark. He is handsome enough and rich enough, for that matter. But he is Matthew Senhouse's son, and Matthew was stable boy at Eshold before he began weaving. The Senhouses are very common people, Lucy."

" Very uncommon people, I should think, father. Their mill is like a white stone palace, six stories high ; and I heard John Stayley tell you that they were seeking more land with good water to build another."

" But it is Matthew Senhouse that is the money-maker ; when he is dead, what will that poetical looking lad of his, with his long artist fingers, do with two mills ? What does he do now but idle around, writing letters to a lass that can't marry him anyway. Has Grace gone home ?"

" Yes, father. But you don't know what Mark does. He is the designer to the firm. It was he that made all those delicate patterns that charmed every judge at the exhibition, and caused the Senhouse carpets and woolen goods to take the prizes. Mrs. Stayley told me that Stenhouse and Co. could spare Mark less than anybody."

" You are a gentleman's daughter, Lucy, and can marry neither spinner nor artist. Those Stayleys

have joined hands with the cotton lords; there is few of the country families notice them now."

"But Stayley has made money, and will leave all his sons and daughters independent; and Stayley Place is clear of debt now, and has had a new wing and four hundred acres added to it."

"Walk through the picture gallery, Lucy, and see how many generations of knights and ladies have held this noble hall. What if I am poor, am I not still an Eshold? Shall I turn woolstapler, and marry my daughter to a picture painter? If the worst comes, I can still find enough to plant the old root in a new soil."

"Please, father, don't be angry; but it seems to me that Eshold the Red-handed, who took Eshold from Swale at the sword's point, was in a far meaner business than Stayley was when he built Stayley Mills to save his old home from the auctioneer's hammer."

"Go and tie up your carnations, Lucy; you don't know what you are talking about. And if any of the people are going to Baildon, tell them to bid Joseph Nalor come Monday night to see me."

Then he went where he had advised Lucy to go, and walked sadly up and down among his pictured ancestors. There was the red-handed rascal who had founded the house in blood and rapine; there was Reginald Eshold, who had taken the right side in the Reformation, and made a large slice of Eshold Abbey by it; there was John Eshold, a great Parliamentary soldier; and Rufus Eshold, a favorite minister of the Prince of Orange; and Marmaduke

Eshold, a strong partisan of the Georges—all of them men who knew when to "take occasion by the hand," and turn the spirit of their age to their own advantage.

Why should he not do the same? He was in great straits: no one but himself knew how great. There had been a threatening lawyer that very day with him, and there was already one mortgage on the Hall. He had been reading much lately about Australia, and he had begun to think seriously lately of transporting what he could save to the great plains of the newer England. He hardly knew what to do; but, strange as it may appear, he looked forward with some kind of hope to opening his heart to Joseph Nalor.

For a strange kind of feudal friendship existed between the families. The Nalors had borne the standard of the Esholds on many a bloody field, and the tie between Grace and Lucy was only one of a long series that made Eshold and Nalor something more than friends. They clasped hands cordially, and then Nalor fell at once into his own social position:

"Tha needs me, squire?"

"Yes, Joseph, I need thee. I have made up my mind to sell Eshold, and take Lucy, and what's left, and go to Australia. Thou must go with me."

"Eshold an' Nalor, hand an' glove, squire; we wee'nt part till we dee. Is it for lack o' brass that Eshold is to be sold?"

"For lack of brass, and it is a bitter thought to me that some spinning-jenny owner will buy these

sweet old acres and perhaps build great brick mills all up Eshold Force."

"Eshold Force be'st grandest water power int' county, squire. If it could nobbut turn a wheel for Eshold's fortune. Squire, I'd hold on to it. I'll fend sheep wi' thee in Australia, willing too, but I'd rayther help thee spin Eshold wool at Eshold Force."

The squire looked at Nalor's keen, thoughtful face and seemed impressed with his reply, but he added immediately: "There is another reason for Australia, Nalor; it won't do to have Miss Lucy stay here and marry Mark Senhouse."

Nalor started. "Is that rayly so, squire? I want to know truly. There's a deal hangs on it."

"What? You must tell me that first."

"Eh! then I've been angry; I thowt he were fooling round my lass."

"Nay, nay, Grace helped him on with Lucy, that were all. Lucy has been all above board, as a lady should be. She's kept naught from me. They got acquainted at Harrowgate Springs last summer. It was Madame Stayley's doing—but Lucy told me all."

Nalor heard a great deal more, but only indistinctly; his mind was busy with the mistake he had made, and a probability that looked very like a promise of good for Eshold.

Tuesday morning he had a long interview with Matthew Senhouse, the result of which was twofold. First Matthew went to his son's office, and ignoring all questions of fern and palm designs, asked Mark two plain questions:

"Mark, do you love Lucy Eshold?"

"With all my heart, father."

"And you'd like to marry her?"

"I'd like nothing on earth so well."

Then he mounted his nag and rode thoughtfully over to Eshold. He met the squire at the park gate, and the two men turned their horses under the great shadowing birches. Senhouse hesitated a moment, but seeing the squire looked curiously at him, he went straightforward to business.

"Squire, I don't forget the days when I was your whipper-in, and if I have made a bit of brass sin', I 'm none so settin up wi' it as to forget you are Eshold and I am Senhouse. I want to buy the land on Eshold Force, and I 'll pay for it £10,000 down, and give you a share in the mill I 'll build there; and if you 'll let your name stand wi' mine, I 'll niver do aught to dishonor it. There's my hand on it."

Eshold was greatly touched, and the men rode on in silence. Senhouse did not hurry the answer; he wished his proposal to be fairly weighed; but in a few moments Eshold frankly said:

"There is my hand, Senhouse. From this hour we are friends, and, if you wish it, partners."

That is how Eshold of Eshold became the great manufacturer of the North Riding; how Eshold Force grew to be a richer stream than the golden Pactolus; how Eshold Hall is the home of a lovely matron called Senhouse, and how among the great men in the Eshold gallery, the next generation shall hold greatest, "Thomas, the manufacturer, and re-founder of Eshold Hall."

"IT'S GUID TO BE HONEST AND TRUE."

"An honest man's the noblest work of God"—POPE.

"You 'll tak' care o' the siller, an' haud the gear thegither, Andrew?"

"Deed will I; but dinna be counting the siller at this hour, fayther."

"An' what for not? I've been busy i' the makin' o' it for saxty years, an' I'm no 'shamed o' my wark. There's nane can say but what I made it right, an' did right wi' it."

"I'm saying naught again siller, fayther."

"Never do it, Andrew. Men wha can mak' money never speak lichtly o' it; they ken o'er weel its power. It's the money-makers, my lad, that built a' the kirks an' the colleges an' the hospitals. It's the money-makers that send the Bible roun' the warld an' feed the folks as canna feed themselves. You 'll do your duty wi' your siller, Andrew, an' tak care o' yoursel' an' Helen. The warld 'll mind the rest." With which rather contradictory injunctions,

old John Moir fell calmly into that sleep which makes mortality immortal.

Two years previous to his death John Moir had been worth at least £10,000, besides his business and his pretty home beyond Rutherglen. Now it was impossible to say how his audit stood. For he had been one of the earliest victims of the railway mania, and stock to an immense amount represented not only the whole of his own fortune, but also £8,000 borrowed money. His son looked with a constantly lengthening face over this scrip, and waited impatiently to know the full measure of his disappointment.

In the meantime he carried on the business as usual. There was no use in telling Helen an uncertain trouble.

So, for nearly half a year, there was little change in their home. Helen tended her house and garden wrote letters to her lover, and drove their little phaeton into Glasgow every night for her brother, Andrew. It was not altogether a pleasant drive, for the store was in the Cowcaddens, a dirty, noisy street, very different to what it was when her grandfather began business in it seventy years before.

One afternoon in November she felt this particularly. Everywhere it was dark and muddy, and through the thick fog the wretched crowds and dim lights loomed in unnatural and ugly proportions. She hoped Andrew would not keep her waiting. On the contrary, he came to the door, called a lad to hold the horse, and bid her come into the office.

"Do you see that pile of railway scrip, Helen?"

"Yes, Andrew."

"It is guid for naething."

"Shall we lose much?"

"Everything."

Then they rode silently home, each with the bitterness of a private care added to the one they bore in common; for both of them were in love. Andrew *knew* that Isabel Malcolm would never marry a poor man; and Helen feared whether James Blair would stand such a sudden change of fortune. After dinner, Helen said:

"Come, Andrew; a sorrow faced is half conquered. Let us count the worst."

"You have £5,000 in the Clyde Bank. No one can touch that, Helen; and I suppose that James Blair is man enough to be laird o' his ain word. I can sequester the estate, and pay five shillings on the pound. Naebody will blame me; it's nane o' my fault."

"I'm not going to hae father blamed either, Andrew, if I can help it. Aunt Mary left me that money, and she 'd like as well as I would that it went for the honor of John Moir's name; an' if James Blair would not marry me without tocher, then I would not marry him, though he were Lord Provost o' Glasgow."

"You are a brave, guid girl, Helen; an' if you 'll stand by me we 'll save our honor an' our guid name, though we tyne baith love an' gold for them."

"There's my hand, Andrew!"

"Think well, sister; you may grip rough days in it!"

"I'm no feared for the days I never saw, Andrew.

You hae said what we *can* do; now tell me what you would *like* to do?"

"I'd like to sell this house, an' most o' its plenishing. The proceeds, put to your £5,000, wad mak' a' of £10,000; the ither £8,000 lies between Brodie, Blackie and Laing; I would gie them my written promise, and pay it."

"But how?"

"The business is a guid business wi' some change. Drop the silk and lace department (for wha wants silk an' lace i' the Cowcaddens?) and add plain ready-made clothing to suit the hard-working bodies wha live a' round about. The private offices look into the Arcade; I was thinking a guid grocery might be started i' them. I could manage baith, wi' ane clerk to help me; an' there's nae rent to pay. The place was leased for a hun'red years, and the rent paid up lang syne."

"Then you ought to hae a home near by; what room is there above the store?"

"Five guid rooms, if they were cleaned an' sorted up a wee."

"We 'll hae them cleaned, an' we 'll make our home there. Home is a full cup, Andrew, *anywhere.*"

"Helen, it's an easy thing for a man to do right if a guid woman stands shoulder to shoulder wi' him. I 'll see everybody to-morrow that John Moir owed a shilling to."

"And I hae my ain little affair to settle, then I 'll ken just what promise to gie you, Andrew." They clasped hands, and kissed each other. Helen was

greatly touched at this mark of her brother's pleasure with her; like most of his countrymen he disliked demonstrative affection. Helen knew that a kiss from Andrew meant an approbation and love he had no words to express.

The next morning she wrote to her lover:

"JAMIE, DEAR: Come and see me as soon as may be. I have that to say which will make us firmer friends, or part us for ever.

"Yours, HELEN MOIR."

James Blair smelt disaster—as she meant he should—in the note. He took two days to make some inquiries and think things over, and then, in the most cautious of humors, went to see his betrothed.

Helen told him frankly what she and Andrew had determined to do.

James smiled, sarcastically, and answered that he "was glad Helen's money was a thing by itself."

"Not at all," said Helen, hotly. "I shall gie Andrew my £5,000—every bawbee o' it."

"Helen, if you had wanted to break our engagement, you might hae done it wi a screed o' writing. There wasn't any occasion to bring me a' of twenty miles to tell me you were gaun to mak a fool o' yoursel' an' me."

"Yes, there was—I might hae had too guid a memory o' you, James Blair. I shan't spend time fretting for a man who looks as maen an' contemptible as you do, this hour."

She spent the rest of the day in her own room, and whatever her battle, she won it. It was a cheer-

ful face that met Andrew Moir at the dinner-table. He did not even guess that James had been there, until Helen said :

"I'm wanting the place o' your clerk, Andrew. If you can manage the groceries, I can sort the hosiery weel enough, an' I 'll charge you naething but my board."

He took her offer frankly and gratefully. Helen moved in all things rapidly and decisively ; in a week the rooms above the store had been made comfortable, and even pretty ; and as soon as Andrew's business arrangements had been completed, brother and sister fell naturally and quietly into the course they had marked out for themselves.

Helen felt the changes of this movement keenly. Yet she was not unhappy. Andrew's increased love and care over her, and her own sense of gratified honor and duty, were a great recompense ; and when the stores were closed at night, and the brother and sister counted up their gains and talked over their plans by their cosy supper-table, they were well enough content.

They worked hard, spent very little, had no rent and but a trifle in wages to pay, and yet at the end of the first year they had only been able to save £500 ; at this rate they might work many years ere they would be free. Yet on they went, year after year, paying sometimes more and sometimes a little less, receiving no encouragement but such as their own hearts gave them. Andrew's payments had become a matter of course. As his bills fell due he met them. No one thanked him for doing his duty.

Fortunately both Helen and he had been taught from childhood to accept duty as the grandest lever of life ; they found a good deed *its own reward.*

At the end of six years they had paid off £4,000, and the stores were very prosperous. There had been so many manufactories built in the neighborhood that the stand had become a very choice one, and Andrew had thoughts of getting a partner and largely increasing his business. While he was hesitating a cousin of his father's died and left Andrew and Helen Moir each £1,000. Helen paid hers promptly into the debt of John Moir's estate, and Andrew used his to carry out his intentions.

He made the change just at the right time. "Andrew Moir's cheap stores" grew in favor far beyond the Cowcaddens ; and so many respectable people, from all parts of the city, came to try his bargains that he thought it no folly to re-open the silk and lace department he had laughed at six years before.

He had now forty clerks, male and female, and Helen disappeared from the store, but she still made the rooms above a bright and pleasant home. Having, however, much time, and being an active little woman, she began to busy herself about the poor of the neighborhood. She became an authority—a loving mistress—an angel of comfort to the wretched hearts in the surrounding wynds.

In these visits she occasionally met a clergyman like-minded with herself ; they worked many months together, knowing not each other's name. Then one bitter winter day when Helen was caught in a storm, he brought her home under his umbrella, and

went up to her cosy parlor to get warm. He had known John Moir, and Andrew and Helen made him stop the evening. He said nothing about his church, and they were too delicate to ask him. The friendship grew without social introductions, for after many weeks' intimacy, Helen only knew him as Mr. Lindsey. It was in a great meeting in the City Hall the brother and sister first learned that their familiar friend was one of the wisest and best of Scotland's wise and good men.

The next time he called, Helen met him with full eyes. "Andrew and I were at the meeting last night, Doctor."

"Were you, Helen? Then you know that I am going to Geneva for a few weeks."

Helen turned very pale. "Is there anything I can do for your poor, while you are away, Doctor?"

"No, I have provided for them. You can do something, everything for me, Helen. You can make me the happiest of men."

And truly he looked so, when, half an hour afterwards, Andrew came upstairs at his sister's request, to give his sanction to the promise Helen had just made.

Still it was hard to persuade Helen to resign her post and go with the doctor to Geneva. But Andrew insisted that she had more than done her share, and that his affairs would now be helped better by her marriage than by any other course. So there was a quiet, handsome wedding, and a great gathering on the pier to set off with honors, and well-wishing, the good doctor and his beautiful bride.

The tide had taken the turn; henceforward Andrew Moir sailed on a fortunate wave. In two years he was a free man, with one of the largest and most lucrative business connections in the city. He had paid his father's debts to the last farthing, and no one had said "thank you" to him—honest men don't pay each other compliments for doing an honorable deed—but Andrew felt their opinion of him in the grip of their hand, in their greeting in the warehouses, and in the lifted hats of the Merchant's Exchange. If he had wanted a hundred thousand pounds he could have borrowed it without doubt or dispute.

He was very proud indeed of his sister's marriage. There was a great deal of humanity in Andrew Moir; and one day, when James Blair came to ask him for a position, and "ventured to speer after Miss Moir," Andrew felt the greatest pleasure in saying:

"Miss Moir married three years syne the great Doctor Lindsey. They are staying wi' the Duke o' Argyle at present, for the doctor has been at Balmoral, preaching to her maist gracious majesty. It's a gran' thing for them baith, for it's no often the queen hears as guid a sermon—mair's the pity."

But he gave James the place he asked, and so it happened that the first time James Blair saw again the woman he had so scornfully rejected, he carried out to her carriage some silks and linens she had been buying. He gave the parcels to a servant, and looked at Helen; but she was listening to the doctor, and never saw him; for when Helen's hus-

band was speaking Helen Lindsey had neither eyes nor ears for any other person.

It was not long after this time that, one day, two beautiful women stepped from a handsome carriage and entered Andrew's stores. One of them looked straight at Andrew, and Andrew, blushing like a girl, accosted her. They talked of common things until her companion went to another department; then Andrew said:

"What must I call you now?"

"My name is still Isabel Malcolm."

"Have you never married?"

"Have you?"

"Why have you not married, Isabel?"

"Do you need to ask me, Andrew?"

"I was afraid you would not marry me when I was poor."

"Did you ever try me?"

That evening Isabel, folded in Andrew's arms, vowed that she would have been his wife ten years before, and Andrew believed her firmly.

"There are few girls would have been as faithful as you, Isabel," he whispered; and Isabel whispered:

"Few girls love as fondly as I love you, dear."

Three months afterwards Andrew was the happiest of men, and Bailie Malcolm is just as proud of his son-in-law as Andrew is of his brother-in-law.

"They are a guid stock, thae Moirs," he says to his old cronies—"brither an' sister, kith an' kin, root an' branch, sterling a' through."

THE END.

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